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A Christian Hindoo Family.

The Wildfords. Frontispiece.

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THE

WILDFORDS IN INDIA.

[Mrs J. M. Church]

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"POKE AND HER SISTERS," "MICHAEL GRAHAM," ETC.

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The Wildfords in India.

CHAPTER I.

A VISIT TO ZANZIBAR.

THE holidays were nearly over, and it was almost school-time again. Christmas presents had begun to be an old story, and some of the little people, tired of play, had fairly taken to yawning, while others were really growing quarrelsome. It was quite time for them to go to work again.

A girl and boy of ten and twelve sat at a table in a bright, pleasant-looking room, on one of the very last days of December, listlessly turning over the nice presents they had brought out to look at, for the twentieth time, perhaps, and wondered why Minnie's writing-desk, with its pretty paper and violet ink, its ivory-carved pen-handle and all its many conveniences, did not look so attractive as usual, while Harry's printing-press (that he had

actually talked of in his sleep before Christmas) had quite lost its charm.

There were books and pictures and many other things spread out before them, but Minnie's bright eyes were fixed on a ruby ring that glittered on her finger, while Harry's hands were thrust into his pockets and his mouth was puckered into a whistle. Suddenly he took his eyes from the ceiling, at which he had been staring with all his might, and fixed them upon his sister. He began to look at her from her head to her feet, and then from her feet up again, as though he wished to examine her very carefully.

Now, Minnie was a very pretty little girl, handsomely dressed in the latest fashion for children, and, unfortunately, she knew all this quite well herself, and prided herself not a little on her nice appearance. So when Harry stared in that way at her neat bronze boots that fitted her so beautifully, then at the blue poplin dress and pretty white apron, and lastly at the golden hair that had been so carefully crimped by Sarah, the maid, and tied back with a blue ribbon, Minnie thought it quite uncomfortable, and asked her brother what he was thinking of.

"How I'd hate to be a girl!" was Harry's an-

swer—"dressed up like a peacock, with your hair all in a snarl. Girls are awful vain! That's right, get mad now! I knew you would."

Minnie's cheeks were very red at this attack, and her eyes were flashing; she knew that she was vain, and that made her all the more angry.

"I think boys are perfectly hateful," she began, while Harry burst out laughing. He loved his sister, but he loved to tease her, and affairs began to look rather stormy.

But there was another person in the room who has not yet been mentioned. She had been perfectly quiet, but had, nevertheless, known all that was going on. This was a very pleasant-looking elderly lady lying among the pillows on a lounge near the fire, reading a newspaper.

Just at this moment she said in a clear voice, and very regretfully, "The imaum of Muscat is dead!"

The children both started and turned toward her. They had often played "Queen Dido's dead," but they did not think this was meant for a play.

"What did you say, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, full of curiosity. "What is 'eem-aum?"

"Muskrat," said Harry, half to himself; "I know what that is."

"The imaum of Muscat," continued grandmamma. "Imaum means ruler. Now, which of you can tell me where Muscat is?"

Minnie shook her head over it, while Harry said boldly that it was in India.

"No," was the reply; "let us find it on the map."

Harry's school-atlas was in the room, and with grandmamma's help Muscat was found to be a city in the south-eastern part of Arabia.

"There it is," said Harry, quite proudly, "right at the end of the Strait of Ormus, which separates Arabia from Beloochistan. Did you ever see this imaum, grandmamma?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wildford; "I paid him a visit once, and your mamma was with me."

"Oh!" exclaimed Minnie, whose idea of paying visits was in a carriage with a card-case; "did you go all the way to Arabia, grandmamma, to call upon him?"

"No, my dear; I did not see him in Arabia at all; I saw him at Zanzibar, where his son was governor."

Harry tried to think where Zanzibar was, for he knew he should be asked presently, but all he could be quite sure of was that it was not in the United States.

"Look on the eastern coast of Africa," said Mrs. Wildford, and Minnie's sharp eyes soon discovered a very small island close to the shore with a city of the same name.

"But how did you get way off there, grandmamma?" she asked. "This isn't India." For she knew that Mrs. Wildford had been living in India, where she spent several years with her husband in teaching the poor heathen about the blessed Saviour.

"We were coming home from India," was the reply, "and the captain of the vessel wished to go to Zanzibar to get a cargo of merchandise. We spent a month there, collecting elephants' tusks and gum-copal and turtle-shells, and many other things that were brought to this country and sold for a great deal of money."

"How very strange!" said Minnie, wonderingly, while Harry began to think that a great deal of fun was to be gotten out of grandmamma. Perhaps she could tell them all about elephant hunts and thick forests full of queer trees and dreadful snakes, and perhaps she had seen sharks and crocodiles, and, possibly, a gorilla. His eyes looked twice as large at the very thought.

Minnie was thinking of the beautiful flowers

and shells and bright-hued birds that are found in tropical regions, and she wondered if grandmamma wouldn't some day show her the inside of those queer-looking boxes in her room, and especially the little India cabinet that stood on a small table near her bed.

For Mrs. Wildford was almost a stranger in her daughter's family; it was many years since she left India, and the work she had done there made her almost an invalid. When she returned to her native country, she came alone, for her husband died and was buried among the people he had taught so faithfully. When her daughter was married, she went to live with an older sister who needed her care, but she, too, had died lately, and Mrs. Wildford had come to spend the remainder of her life with her children. It took her grandchildren some time to get acquainted with her, for she had lived many miles away and had seen very little of them, and Harry and Minnie were rather afraid of grandmamma.

Perhaps they were a little spoiled, and they did not believe that she thought them very good children, but they felt quite sure that grandmamma herself was just as good as it was possible for any one to be. No one could see Mrs. Wildford's sweet

smile and her patience in suffering and disappointment without feeling that she was one who lived very close to her Saviour.

She had given herself in early youth to her Master's work among the heathen in India, and had hoped to spend her life there, but this being denied her, she now cheerfully devoted herself to the little duties that lay around her daily path. Christ's little ones were her especial care, and the two children who brought back the days when her own children clustered around her—three of whom were now lying with their father in a foreign grave —were especially dear to her.

"But, grandmamma," said Harry, when the map had been carefully studied, "aren't you going to tell us about Zanzibar, and the elephants, and the old fellow you went to see, and all?"

"He was not a particularly 'old' fellow, Harry," said Mrs. Wildford, smiling.

"He was a very great man, was he not, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, with much interest.

"Yes," replied her grandmother; "he was a rich man in gold and jewels, but for all that he was poor: he knew nothing of the Saviour. His religion taught him that it was right to have a great many wives and to do many other things that

Christians know to be wrong. But I am going to tell you about Zanzibar and my visit to the imaum. It was about the 1st of January, 184– ("Just this season of the year," whispered Harry), when our vessel stopped at the island of Zanzibar."

"Was it a pretty place," asked Minnie, "with nice houses and trees?"

"No," said Mrs. Wildford; "I did not think it at all pretty; it was very bare-looking, with low, flat-roofed houses built of stones and mud, and walls or fences of the same. There were tall, beautiful cocoanut trees there, and palm and orange trees."

"Did you have oranges?" asked both children, eagerly.

"Yes," replied their grandmother; "they were as plentiful as apples are here; but I have not come to that yet. The captain took us there, and got rooms for us at the house of the English consul. Our sitting-room had very small windows with iron gratings instead of panes of glass. These windows had very deep seats or sills, owing to the thickness of the walls, and your mamma, who was then about five years old, would stand on the window-sill to look into the street. Her head just about reached the top of the window, so

you will know that the windows were quite short. The people of Zanzibar were all dark colored, and many of them were black. The better class were Arabs and the servants were African slaves.

"When the fair little golden-haired child appeared at the window, they stood in groups and stared at her; then smiled, showing their unbroken rows of large white teeth, and ended by shouting with perfect delight. Ada stayed at the window, looking quite grave and thoughtful, for some time, but at last she ran away abashed, and burying her head in my lap, she sobbed out, 'Mamma, mamma! the black people are laughing at me!'"

"Don't it seem funny to think that mamma ever talked in that way," said Minnie, "and that she was really a great deal younger than I am now?"

"Why did they laugh at her?" asked Harry, quite indignantly.

"Because they knew no better," was the reply, "and a white child was a very odd sight to them. I have seen people in this country who did not know better than to laugh at people for peculiarities that they could not help."

Harry became very quiet; he was not at all sure that he was free from this charge himself.

"The people were all very kind to us," con-

tinued Mrs. Wildford, "and one day the consul, with whom we were staying, told us that we had all been invited to the palace of his Highness the imaum of Muscat, who spent about half of his time at Zanzibar. The American consul and his son had lately arrived, and we all went in a body to accept the invitation. A palanquin had been sent for me and my little Ada, with four servants to carry it."

"What is a palanquin?" asked Minnie.

"I know," said Harry, impatiently; "it is a little closet that they put you in, and then some men take you up on their shoulders and walk off with you."

"It is a small carriage," said his grandmother, "on poles instead of wheels. It is made of wood, and there is a two-leaved door in the middle, like a folding-door, with windows at each side, and often at each end. There is a small mattress inside to sit upon, with a brace for the back and shoulders.

"When your mamma and I got into the palanquin, a crowd of black women rushed out from a house near by and peered through the windows at us, laughing and shouting with pleasure at our white skins. They would have followed us all the

way to the palace, which was two miles off, had not the gentlemen who were with us prevented them.

"When we reached the palace, we found it not much better than the other houses in Zanzibar, as it was built of the same materials, but it was larger, and in front there was quite a large enclosure filled with beautiful flowers. There were a few cocoanut trees about the house, but the general look of the place was bare, and it seemed very little like a palace.

"About halfway to the house we were met by a fine-looking man with an Arab face, an immensely long beard and a high, pointed turban. His dress was of brown cloth with very wide, flowing sleeves, and his expression was grave and dignified. This was his Highness the imaum of Muscat.

"I had left the palanquin, and after shaking hands with me and my companions in real American style, the imaum grasped me firmly by the arm, and taking Ada by the other hand, he led us into the hall of audience."

"What is that?" asked Harry.

"What we would call a reception-room," was the reply; "a room, or rather hall (for so it was),

where visitors were received. A number of black eunuchs were posted on the verandah as a guard; they were dressed almost entirely in white, which set off their dark skins in strong contrast. They were armed with short spears, and had we not been so politely met by his Highness, they would probably have stopped us to learn our errand before allowing us to enter the palace. The hall of audience was bare enough, the only handsome things in it being some chandeliers that were probably made in England."

"Why, how did they get there?" asked Minnie, in surprise.

"Just as things from Zanzibar get to other places, my dear child; they had been carried there by some vessel. Almost the only furniture in this hall of audience consisted of bamboo chairs, of which there was a long row on each side of the wall. Do you know what bamboo is?"

"I know!" shouted Harry, who feared that grandmamma would tell them before he got a chance to display his knowledge; "it's a cane, and it grows in warm countries, whole jungles full of it. I've seen bamboo chairs often."

"I haven't," said Minnie, in a rather injured tone.

"Yes, you have," replied her brother, "only no one told you they were bamboo."

"It is very much like the seat of this chair," said Mrs. Wildford, pointing to one in the corner, "and as soon as I have an opportunity, Minnie, I will show you a real bamboo chair. Having seated me," she continued, "the imaum placed himself in a corner chair, and the three gentlemen of the party were grouped around him, while your mamma was taken on his knee. She sat very quietly for a moment or two, and then suddenly looking up in his face, which was very long and quite dark, she gave a scream that echoed through the hall."

The children both laughed, and Minnie said, "I would have screamed too."

"Of course you would," replied her brother; "just like a girl! I would have taken right hold of his beard and said, How are you, old fellow?"

"Then you would have done a very silly and disrespectful thing," said his grandmamma, "and perhaps have gotten the whole party into trouble."

Harry muttered that he didn't think screaming was very respectful, and Minnie asked what the imaum did when his little visitor screamed so.

"He put her down very gently," was the reply, "and said to the interpreter, 'She is frightened.'

Your mamma ran directly to her mamma for comfort, and became very quiet for the remainder of the visit. We could only talk with his Highness through the interpreter, for he did not understand English nor we Arabic, but I think we managed to say a great deal, considering that it all had to be said over twice."

"What did you talk about?" asked Harry, eagerly; "did he tell you about his elephants and things?"

"No," replied Mrs. Wildford; "the imaum did not use elephants, but beautiful Arab horses; he told us about them. There are no elephants in Zanzibar."

"No elephants!" repeated Harry, in great disgust; "how could they get elephants' tusks, then, to carry back in the ship?"

"These were brought from the main land," said his grandmother—"from the province of Zanguebar, where the people are not so thick as they are in the little island of Zanzibar. Elephants cannot be used where there are great crowds of people about, because they are so large and clumsy they would trample the people down, and for this reason they did not have them at Bombay, in India, where I spent so many years."

"Well," said Minnie, "what else did the man talk about besides his horses?"

"We were talking of having his people educated," said Mrs. Wildford, "and he seemed to think it would be a very good thing, but he was not quite ready to open the way for us to begin. He talked to us also about his shambers."

"Oh dear!" said Minnie, who began to find Arabic people very perplexing; "what in the world did he mean? You may as well tell us, grandmamma, for we shall never guess."

"I do not expect you to guess," replied her grandmother, laughing; "he meant his gardens. He had fine, large gardens a short distance from the city, where only cloves and nutmegs were grown."

"I like cloves," said Minnie, "they taste so nice and sharp, but I don't care about nutmegs."

"I think you care for them in cakes and puddings," said Harry, "about as much as any one I know of. I never heard that nutmegs were to be handed around like apples."

"Please go on, grandmamma," said Minnie, who had quite a dread of Harry's attacks.

"The imaum seemed really anxious to have us see these gardens, and he even sent horses for us

the next day, but I was not able to ride. The gentlemen went, and found the gardens very beautiful. Do you know how nutmegs grow, Harry?"

"On a tree, don't they, like acorns?"

"No; they do not grow at all like acorns, for the tree is not nearly so large as the oak, and each nut is wrapped in a soft husk. Mace is found between this husk and the outer shell."

Harry resolved to make a note of this, although he did not think it worth while to say that he had never heard of it before. He was quite an intelligent boy, and he liked to learn new facts.

"The clove," continued Mrs. Wildford, "has a very strong leaf that is quite like the mountain laurel. The flower is a delicate blossom of creamy whiteness, with something of the odor that the clove has, and buds, blossoms and fruit are all found together. The slaves gather the cloves carefully as they ripen from day to day, and I think it must be rather pleasant work."

"What did you do at the palace besides talk?" asked Minnie, whose curiosity respecting the imaum was not yet satisfied.

"We were furnished with refreshments," replied the grandmother, "and the servants who brought them to us were dressed with Oriental splendor.

They carried their waiters around to the visitors, but the imaum took nothing himself. These waiters were just japanned tea-trays."

"Like that one in the nursery?" said Minnie, in a disappointed tone. "Why, I thought they would be gold in a palace; ours are silver."

"Everything was very plain, indeed, my dear; we had some very black coffee served in a sort of wine-glass placed in a larger one, some American crackers, sherbet, which is a very sweet drink, some little cakes and preserved fruit."

"I don't think that was anything great," said Harry; "I would have been real mad to have crackers and things I could get here handed to me away off in Zanzibar. Why couldn't the man give you splendid grapes and bananas and oranges and sweetmeats, I should like to know?"

"I did not ask him," replied his grandmother. "I concluded that the imaum was trying to entertain us in what he thought was the most agreeable manner. When the servants had carried the refreshments away, the interpreter told me that his Highness invited me and my little daughter to go with him to the apartments where his wives lived. These women are never allowed to appear before men, and the gentlemen of the party were left in

the hall of audience, while the imaum led the way up some very rickety stairs, and your mamma and I followed him.

"We came out upon what is called the terrace, which was over the verandah, and railed across the front. There were rooms on both sides of this terrace, and doors and windows opened upon it. The imaum spoke to some one through a window, and then took a key from his pocket and unlocked a door. We followed him to an inner door, where he changed his slippers, and then led the way into an elegant saloon. It was beautifully furnished with lounges and long mirrors, and all sorts of tables, and pretty and curious things brought from all parts of the world.

"We were soon joined by nine women, who also changed their slippers before they entered the room. They had half masks on their faces, which did not prevent me from seeing that most of them were young and handsome; every one wore a veil of thick red silk that was thrown back and fell below the waist. They had also a tunic of flowery silk, very much like a deep sacque, that reached halfway between the knee and ankle, and very full trowsers. Poor things! although called wives, they were only slaves and could have no wills of

their own. They came up to me and shook hands, but their faces were turned away, and as soon as they had done this they sat together in a group and began to chatter among themselves.

"I asked the imaum, in Hindoostani, if he had any children, and he seemed to understand me, for a bevy of queer-looking little Arabs were called in, but I could not tell the girls from the boys. They stared very hard at my little Ada, but did not offer to touch her, and she, on her part, stared equally hard at them. I tried to attract the children to me, but they only laughed and showed their white teeth, while they hung about their papa with the utmost freedom. He seemed to be quite an affectionate father, and I was glad to see that the children were not afraid of him.

"When we were about to leave, the imaum threw a shawl of Eastern workmanship over my arm. I could only bow my thanks. A present of this kind was an ordinary piece of politeness to foreign visitors, and the captain of the ship received a like attention, but he was quite displeased that his shawl was not handsomer."

"Is that the queer-looking shawl that you sometimes have around you, grandmamma?" asked Minnie.

"Yes, my dear, and when you see it again, I wish you to examine the border carefully. It is all worked by hand, and shows an immense amount of patience."

"Was that the end of your visit?" asked Harry, who cared very little about the shawl.

"Very nearly," was the reply, "for almost as soon as we had returned to the hall of audience the imaum spoke a few words to the interpreter, who then said to us, 'His Highness asks you to excuse him: it is his hour of prayer.' It was four o'clock, and shaking hands with us again, the imaum went up to the house-top to pray, after the custom of the Mohammedans."

"Who are the Mohammedans?" asked Harry, eager for fresh information.

"The followers of Mohammed," replied Mrs. Wildford, "who lived in Arabia more than five hundred years after Christ, and taught people to believe in himself next to God. He made a great many disciples among the people of the East, because he permitted them to live easy, selfish lives, and said that it was only necessary for them to obey the Koran (a book which he gave them in place of the Holy Bible), and they would certainly get to heaven. The Turks are all Mohammedans,

and so are the Arabs, Persians and many other Eastern nations."

"Well," said Harry, reflectively, "the imaum of Muscat must have been a queer old fellow. It was so funny, grandmamma, for you to go and see him."

"Is there anything in what I have told you of him," asked his grandmother, "that it would be well for us to imitate?"

Harry gazed at the speaker in astonishment, but little Minnie, after some hesitation, ventured the words: "He said his prayers, grandmamma."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wildford; "he was almost a heathen, for he knew nothing of the Saviour, but few Christians, I fear, would leave a party of visitors as quietly as though it were the most natural thing in the world to perform a duty to God. So that even a Mohammedan imaum can teach us, if we are willing to learn."

Harry thought rather uncomfortably of many times when he had left his prayers unsaid for very poor reasons, while Minnie began to feel that a Christian child should be more faithful than an untaught Arab.

Grandmamma wisely said nothing more, for she did not believe in preaching, and she knew that

the children would not forget any part of that visit to Zanzibar.

Mrs. Bolton, the mother of Harry and Minnie, came into the room while the children were gathered around their grandmother, and smiled at their eager looks. She was very sweet looking, but she was quite a fashionable lady, and her rich silk dress trailed on the floor as she walked across the room.

Minnie gazed at her mother with eyes of wonderment as she tried to trace the little Ada who had screamed with terror at the dark Arab face so close to her own.

"Oh, mamma," she exclaimed, "grandmamma has been so delightful! She has told us lots about you when you were a little girl, and all about Zanzibar and everything."

"I am afraid my dear mother has gotten herself into trouble," said Mrs. Bolton as she leaned over her; "these little people are so insatiable they will always be asking for more."

"You know, my daughter," was the reply, "that it is one of my greatest pleasures to live those days and those scenes over again, and I intend to give the children a great many accounts yet of my adventures."

"And elephants, grandmamma!" shouted Harry; "there must have been elephants somewhere in India."

Mrs. Wildford smiled as she said, "I brought some curiosities with me from Zanzibar that I must show you when I go to my room."

The children wondered what they were like, but grandmamma did not tell them. The day had been a very bright one, after all, and the brother and sister quite forgot the little disturbance of the morning.

CHAPTER II.

GRANDMAMMA'S ROOM.

ONE day Minnie found herself very comfortably established in her grandmother's room, with just enough of a cold to prevent her from going to school, but she was not ill enough to take nauseous doses. She rather liked this kind of illness, for after a few days of school a holiday seemed a very pleasant thing, and she always enjoyed being petted.

Mrs. Wildford was feeling particularly well this morning, and she had taken her granddaughter to her own room for the express purpose of amusing her. This room had always seemed to the children a charmed spot since grandmamma came to occupy it, but they had been carefully instructed that they were never to go there unless especially invited, and on no account to touch anything except when grandmamma gave them leave.

Grandmamma loved the sunshine, and had plenty of it in her room, but from other parts of the

house it was carefully shut out with blinds and curtains. Mrs. Wildford's blinds were wide open, and the windows were draped only with thin white muslin, but green vines that grew in pots were climbing over the curtains, and Minnie thought this ever so much prettier than blue or red damask.

The Indian cabinet on the little table was the centre of attraction, because you could not at all see what was in it, but there were beautiful shells on the mantel, and Minnie's eyes were fixed so admiringly on these that her grandmother took down two or three of the prettiest and placed them in her hands, saying as she did so, "These came from Zanzibar."

Minnie looked at them with fresh interest, and thought that two or three white ones covered with prickers, as she called them, and having beautiful pink and crimson lips, were the loveliest things she had ever seen.

"Did you really pick these up from the beach, yourself, grandmamma?" she asked.

"No, my dear," was the reply; "I was not able when I was at Zanzibar to do any walking or stooping. These were brought to the door for sale by some of the natives, who took a great many things about in this way."

"There is a shell store down town," said Minnie, "but mamma says the man asks a great deal for his things."

"I have no doubt that he does," replied Mrs. Wildford, "for before the shopkeeper gets them they must pass through several hands, and every one gets more than he paid for the shells, the shopkeeper probably most of all. I dare say that the people of Zanzibar wondered that visitors should care to carry their shells away with them, and only expected to get what would pay them for the trouble of picking them up. I used to have a very large collection of foreign shells, but I have given a great many away."

"Why did you do that, grandmamma?" said Minnie, regretfully.

"Why did your papa and mamma and other friends give you presents at Christmas, Minnie?"

"Because I wanted them, I suppose," said the little girl, slowly.

"It was to give you pleasure, of course," replied the grandmother, "and to give themselves pleasure too, for it is the highest kind of pleasure to make others happy."

Minnie had not yet discovered that there was anything much nicer than to be made happy one's

self, and she wondered if she should ever feel as her grandmother did.

"Did you bring anything else from Zanzibar besides shells?" she asked, presently.

"Yes," was the reply; "here is something else; let me see if you can find out what it is."

"Isn't it a flag?" said Minnie as she turned the curious-looking thing over in her hand.

"That is what most people call it," said her grandmother, "but it is really a fan."

The little girl looked very much surprised, as well she might, for the fan had a handle of very light wood about a yard long, and at one end a small square of coarse white muslin was embroidered with red, green and yellow silk, and finished with a fringe of cocoanut fibres. The muslin was double and worked the same on both sides; it was stiffened with something placed between the two layers. The little square scarcely measured a quarter of a yard, and it was securely fastened to the handle by thin strips of palm leaf. Minnie waved it to and fro with much satisfaction, and found that it answered the purpose of a fan very nicely, but she never could help calling it a flag.

"What else, grandmamma?" for the bright eyes

were roving restlessly about in quest of fresh treasures from Zanzibar.

Mrs. Wildford took a small bottle from a bracket and asked Minnie what she saw in it.

"I see a horrible bug!" she replied, with a half scream. "Oh, please take it away, grandmamma; I am afraid of it!"

"There are two very good reasons," said her grandmother, "why you should not be afraid of it; one is, that the horrible bug is quite dead, and if this is not sufficient, see how tightly his prison-house is sealed up."

Minnie began to think that he was not very dangerous, after all, and even ventured to take the bottle in her own hands. She read on the label, "Scorpion, Zanzibar, 184–."

"How did you get it, grandmamma?" was the next question. "Don't scorpions bite awfully?"

"Their sting is certainly very painful," was the reply. "This is only a baby scorpion, and I came by it in quite an unexpected manner, as I had no intention of bringing one with me. One day, soon after my arrival in America, I was arranging some of my things, and I unfastened two or three fans that were tied together, this one among the number. Suddenly I felt a sharp prick, like running a needle

into one's finger, and on looking for the cause, I saw this small scorpion running as fast as his legs could carry him. I took him up with my scissors and dropped him into a bottle of alcohol where a locust was already established."

"Did he eat the locust?" asked Minnie, eagerly.

"He was too busy to think of feasting," was the reply; "all his legs—and you will see that he has a great many of them—were employed in kicking for about five minutes as hard as he could, but he has been still ever since."

"He was drowned, wasn't he?" asked Minnie; "I'm glad he was killed. But it is very queer that he should have been tucked in among these fans. I wonder if a scorpion ever traveled so far before?"

"It probably came in the form of an egg," said her grandmother, "and was hatched on the voyage. What is still more remarkable, I found the shell of a spider that the scorpion had evidently eaten close to the spot it ran from. This was its provision for the voyage, and it shows us how wonderfully God cares for the meanest of his creatures."

"But, grandmamma," said Minnie, earnestly, "why should God care for such wicked creatures as scorpions, that do nothing but sting people? I should think he would want them all to die, in-

stead of giving them things to eat. I don't mind their eating spiders, though," she added; "I think they ought to die too."

"God has his own wise purposes, my child, in this as in many other things that we cannot understand. The very wisest of us must not presume to think that we could improve the ordering of God's universe in the smallest particular."

As Minnie felt sure that she was not wise at all, she became silent, and looked very hard at the scorpion through a small magnifying glass that her grandmother handed her.

"Why, it looks three times as large as it did before!" said she, at length, "and I see its sting at the end of its tail. How I should hate to feel it! It has claws, too, just like a little lobster. Thank you, grandmamma, for showing it to me, but I think I had rather not look at it any more."

Minnie shuddered a little as she put the scorpion out of sight; she was very glad that such things were not running about in America.

"Do they get into the houses in Zanzibar," she asked, presently, "or are they only out of doors?"

"It is quite common to find scorpions there under the mats," replied Mrs. Wildford, "and in the corners of the rooms. Sometimes a person,

in stepping out of bed, and putting his foot into his boot or slipper, will suddenly feel the sting of a scorpion. They always sting if they are touched, but I have been told that they will crawl harmlessly over you if you remain quiet. I cannot say that I should like to try it."

"Think of a scorpion in your slipper!" said Minnie, looking almost as wretched as though she expected to find one in her own the next morning. "How I should scream! But papa really had a cockroach in his boot once," she continued, "and wore it down town all day before he found it out."

"Did he scream?" asked her grandmother, quite gravely.

"No, ma'am," she replied, a little confused; "cockroaches don't bite or sting, but they are not pleasant."

"But, my dear child," said Mrs. Wildford, very kindly, "if we scream at everything that is not pleasant, we shall make a great deal of unnecessary noise in the world."

"Well," said Minnie, smiling, "I am not going to scream any more, grandmamma, if I can help it. Harry laughs at me so."

"Does he?" said Harry, bounding in at this mo-

ment and giving his sister a kiss. "Oh, grandmamma, I forgot! I'll go back and knock."

And back marched Master Harry to give a gentle rap on the outside of the door.

"I don't think I said, Come in," observed his grandmother as he made his appearance again.

"Didn't you, ma'am?" said he, rather crestfallen.

"No, because you didn't give me time, but now I say, Stay in if you wish. But what brings you home so early?"

"It's not very early, grandmamma; it is half-past two, and I'm off for a splendid skate. Hurrah!"

"And I've had no luncheon," said Minnie, plaintively; "how hungry I must be!"

Harry laughed at his little sister till she grew quite angry.

"I know that grandmamma must have been telling you things," said he; "anything about elephants?"

"No," replied Minnie, trying to forget her injuries; "there was a scorpion, though."

"That begins to sound lively," said Harry, and when Mrs. Wildford brought the bottled reptile out again for his benefit, he called it a gay old

fellow. His cheeks were bright and his eyes sparkling with the crisp, cold air, and Minnie gazed wistfully after him as he went off with his skates on his shoulder, saying,

"Let me know when you come to the elephants, grandmamma."

Mrs. Bolton had gone out to spend the day, and grandmamma and her little visitor had been too much interested to think of the flight of time. But Minnie soon decided that she was very hungry, and Sarah brought up a nice luncheon that had full justice done it.

Then grandmamma had her nap to take, and Minnie went off quietly to her mother's dressing-room, where she took up one of her Christmas books and forgot all about the scorpion for two hours at least.

CHAPTER III.

A SEA-VOYAGE.

THERE came a very stormy day, when the snow and sleet beat violently against the windows. Minnie was not allowed to go out at all, and Harry came directly home from school and proposed to his grandmother that she should be a book of travels.

"A fellow gets so tired of reading," said he, "and you can't ask questions of the people in books, and when they say queer things, you can't contradict 'em. Not that I mean to contradict you, grandmamma," he added, hastily, "but you know what I mean."

Mrs. Wildford smiled, and said that she was not quite sure that she did know, but she believed she understood that Harry wished to hear an account of her travels instead of taking the trouble to read a book on the subject.

"I know I should like it a great deal better," he replied, "so please begin at the very beginning,

grandmamma, and tell us all about your going to India and what you did when you got there."

"I cannot promise you any elephants," said grandmamma, presently.

"Oh, never mind," replied Harry; "there'll be lots of other things, and I want to hear about the people in India: they're such funny-looking things in pictures."

"Please do, grandmamma," pleaded Minnie; "it will be so nice. I don't know a single girl whose grandmother ever went to India."

As she looked a little lofty at this, Harry hastened to assure her that she had nothing to do with grandmamma's going to India, which, as she was not born until long afterward, Minnie could not deny.

"Well, I know it's a nice thing to have ancestors," said she, defiantly, "for I heard one of the large girls at school say so."

Harry began to laugh, as he generally did whenever Minnie made a mistake, and grandmamma asked what she meant by ancestors.

"Why, people that do things before you are born, aren't they?" said the little girl, half frightened.

"All the people that did things before you were

born couldn't be your ancestors, Minnie," replied Mrs. Wildford; "ancestors are persons of your own family who have lived and died many years ago—your great-grandparents, for instance, and even farther back than that; you and Harry are their descendants. Some of these people may have been very bad, but that would be no fault of yours, and if they were good, you could take no credit to yourself for their goodness. But what people generally boast of in their ancestors is wealth, fame or rank, and this is probably what Minnie's friend was speaking of. It is a very pleasant thing to be well-born, of good, brave, noble ancestors, but as it does not depend in the least upon ourselves, so it is the very last thing upon which we should pride ourselves."

"Were our ancestors nice people, grandmamma?" asked Harry.

"They were nice people in every sense of the word," replied his grandmamma, "for they were true servants of God: 'Friend of God' was Abraham's highest title. But we shall not get to India very soon, I am afraid, by going back to our ancestors; that was not the way I started."

Harry was about to say, "Drive on, grandmamma," but he restrained himself just in time.

"There are two things," continued Mrs. Wildford, "that I want my children to remember when they ask me to give them an account of my life in India. The first is that I did not go there for profit or enjoyment in a worldly point of view. I went there solely to benefit the poor heathen who had lived so long in darkness, and the work of a missionary has very little to do with scenes of enjoyment. There are some pleasant things, though, in my Indian experience that I believe you would like to hear about, but then you must remember, too, that I can only tell you of the country as it appeared all those years ago, when your mother was a little girl. Many things have been changed since then, and the knowledge of the gospel is now spread in India almost beyond the hopes of those who worked there then."

"And will you really begin with going off in the ship, grandmamma?" asked Minnie; "I want so much to hear about your sailing over the ocean so far away. How long did it take you to go to India?"

"From May until September; how long is that, Minnie?"

"Four long months," replied the little girl. "Did it really take all that time?"

"Yes," said her grandmother, "and long months they were indeed."

"Would it take as long as that now to go to India?" asked Harry.

"No; it would not take one-third of the time," was the reply. "Travelers now go by what is called the overland route, which means going from here to England first, but keeping on the water nearly all the time. We sailed in what is called a merchant-vessel, and that goes very slowly."

"Who were *we*, grandmamma?" asked Minnie; "you and mamma?"

"No, my child; your mamma was not born then. You never saw your grandfather, Minnie, but we were just married then, and we thought it very pleasant to be able to go and do our work together."

Mrs. Wildford stopped for a few moments, and the children thought of the picture in their mother's room with such a kind expression and deep, loving eyes; that was all they knew of their grandfather.

"We sailed from New York," continued their grandmother, "on a bright morning in May, 183–; our friends all gathered around us to say good-bye, and most of them never expected to see us again.

We sailed off into the ocean, and soon lost sight of land altogether. We did not see it again until we reached Bombay, except a very distant glimpse of the island of Madagascar."

"Here it is," said Harry, who, at his grandmother's request, had brought a map of the world, "away off on the coast of Africa. I don't see what it has to do with going to India."

"Look a little closer, Harry, and tell me just how I would go from New York, in the United States, to Bombay, in India."

Harry began tracing his grandmamma down the map in an imaginary ship, but when he came to the equator, Mrs. Wildford stopped him to tell him of the dreadful heat that made some of the passengers very ill.

"I was very sea-sick," she continued, "and so ill that your dear grandfather had his hands full in attending to me, but every one was very kind—captain and sailors and all. The nights were very beautiful, although I was not able to see many of them; the skies were very clear and the stars bright and large. The Southern Cross, which we do not see above the tropics, was very distinct, and often, as the ship moved, there would be a pathway of light behind her; this was made by curious sea-

animals that seem halfway between fishes and plants. They are quite transparent, and shine beautifully at night. We sailed on to the Cape of Good Hope (Harry found it on the map), and then came the hardest part of our voyage. Going around the point of land at the southern end of Africa is what sailors call doubling the cape, and the waves seemed resolved to do their worst to prevent us doubling it. The ship often appeared to be standing up on end, and then again it would plunge away down into such a valley of water that getting out of it looked quite impossible. But He who holdeth the waters in the hollow of his hand brought us up again in safety, and we were thankful to get into calm seas. We doubled the cape without seeing it at all."

"Didn't you get dreadfully tired of the water, grandmamma?" asked Minnie.

"Yes, dear; I did get tired of it, but I tried to remember that I did not go for pleasure, and for thirty days at least I was too sea-sick to think much about it. After that I was very busy in learning the Mahratta language; one of the missionaries who sailed with us had already spent some years in India, and she was kind enough to teach us during the voyage."

"Was that the language they spoke in India?" asked Harry.

"In that part of India," replied his grandmamma. "Bombay is situated in what is called the Mahratta province, but the dialect of every province is different. After we had passed the cape a very sad thing occurred. Among the sailors was a boy only two or three years older than you, Harry, and this was his first voyage. One day while sitting in the cabin with some of the other ladies, I felt a sudden trembling of the ship, and the motion was so strange that we all began to think the vessel was sinking. It seemed very dreadful to us to be going down into the depths of the ocean, and we fell on our knees to pray, but the lady who had been to India before told us that the ship was only tacking, which means going back, and she thought some one had fallen overboard.

"We rushed upon deck to inquire, and soon learned that the lad I spoke of had been sent up into the rigging for some duty, but not being used to it, he missed his footing, and striking his head as he fell against a heavy beam, he sank into the ocean and never rose again. The ship was put back and a boat lowered to seek for him, but they found only his cap."

"Poor boy!" said Minnie, with tears in her eyes, while Harry looked very sober. "Do you think he was a good boy, grandmamma?"

"I am afraid he had not had very good training," replied Mrs. Wildford; "he ran away from his parents to go to sea, and this was the result of his disobedience. I had scarcely spoken to him, for I had not been able to sit up very long, but I gave him a little tract one day, and afterward I saw him reading it very carefully.

"When I was able to be on deck, and we were not pitching and tossing on a rough sea, your dear grandfather and I would walk up and down, talking of what we would do for the heathen and looking forward with joy to the beginning of our work among them. One day some one said we were making the island of Madagascar, and supposing that this meant to go on shore there, we got ourselves in readiness, but we were quite disappointed to find that we went no nearer than to see a dim streak of land in the distance.

"On we sailed, direct for Bombay, as the captain said, and very soon again we could see nothing before or behind us but the great, deep ocean. Then the captain told us, quite unexpectedly, that in one week we should be in Bombay, and we felt

so glad to think that the long, tedious voyage was nearly over.

"The day before we landed boats were rowed up to the ship, and dark-colored men almost naked came on board with fruit to sell. They had oranges, bananas, dates and some other fruits that I did not know the names of and can scarcely remember now, and they looked so strange in their white turbans and no dress but a piece of cloth tied around their waists that we ladies ran down again to the cabin, quite to the amusement of the captain and sailors, who were used to such sights.

"At length we were sailing into the harbor of Bombay, and the band of missionaries knelt together in prayer to give thanks for our safe arrival. I gazed eagerly around as we approached the city, but it did not look in the least as I expected. The walls of the houses were of mud, and the houses were low, with flat roofs, and oh, sad sight to a Christian! the Hindoo temples rose in place of church-spires, where

> 'The heathen, in his blindness,
> Bows down to wood and stone.'"

"That's from 'Greenland's icy mountains,'" said Minnie. "I know it all, grandmamma."

"But you do not know who wrote it, I think," said Mrs. Wildford. "It is the famous missionary hymn written by Bishop Heber, the good English missionary who was so much beloved in India. I think, Harry, that you would like some day to read his 'Journey through India.'"

"Perhaps I should," replied Harry; "I dare say he saw elephants."

"I have no doubt he did," said his grandmamma. "But I think it is nearly dinner-time, and it will scarcely do for me to talk any more to-day."

"Please get yourself off the ship, won't you, grandmamma?" said Minnie, beseechingly; "that would be such a good place to stop at, just as the stories do."

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wildford, "I will get myself off the ship, and into the mission house; it will not take very long to do that. The ship could not go close to the shore, and we had to be lowered into a small boat. A rope and tackle were fastened to the end of one of the yards of the mainmast of the ship, and one lady at a time was fastened in the chair, covered with the flag and then let down by a pulley into the boat. This was not very pleasant, but the sailors who helped us down were strong and kind, and we did not feel

frightened. How do you think we got from the shore to the house where we were going?"

"Did somebody carry you?" asked Harry.

"Yes; four somebodies carried each of us. A crowd of men with palanquins stood there, very much like the hackmen in our American cities; they chattered at us very earnestly, but we could not understand them. They were probably recommending their different vehicles. Your grandfather selected the nicest-looking palanquin for me (only one person can ride in a palanquin). I got into it, with his help, and your grandfather got into his palanquin, and the dark, half-dressed men trotted off with us to the mission house.

"This was very pleasantly situated a little out of the city, with plenty of beautiful flowers and shrubs and trees around it, and the house had quite a comfortable, home look. We were very kindly welcomed by the missionaries who were already at work there, and were shown to a nice room furnished very much like our rooms at home. The beds were all covered with mosquito-nets, for these pests are thick in India all the year round, and the floors looked very cool and clean with their nice fresh matting. It was nearly tea-time when we arrived, and the meal was quite like an American

tea, so that we began to feel very much at home. And now that I am quite off the ship, Minnie, and landed in Bombay, I think I shall stop to get ready for my dinner in New York."

CHAPTER IV.

MATTERS AND THINGS IN INDIA.

IT was not long before the children were again established in grandmamma's room, eager to hear what happened to her in Bombay.

"What did you do first?" asked Harry, "and didn't everything seem very queer?"

"Yes," said Minnie, "I want to know how people begin to be missionaries. Did you have a crowd of people, and tell them that you had come to teach them?"

"No," replied Mrs. Wildford, "not at first; I might have talked to the Hindoos all day without making them understand me. You forget, my dear, that these people knew nothing of English, and that I knew very little of their language. I had to study hard before I could begin to teach, and your grandfather and I would sit at our lessons day after day and laugh at each other's mistakes, while the natives laughed at us both. But your grandfather was quicker at learning the lan-

guage than I was, and long before I could converse freely he was preaching to them of the Saviour and winning souls to Christ. I went into the school that was held in the house where we first lodged, to see how the heathen children were taught. It was very different from our schools. The scholars were dark-skinned little girls from six to ten or twelve years old, some with scarcely anything on them in the way of clothing, others with the full dress of the Hindoo women, which always includes a veil in the same piece with the dress, and some with a spot of red paint upon their forehead, the meaning of which you would never guess."

Harry seemed quite disposed to try, but grandmamma finally had to tell him:

"It meant that they were married women; it is a part of the marriage ceremony for the Hindoo bridegroom to paint the bride's forehead in this way."

"Why, grandmamma," exclaimed Minnie, in great perplexity, "I thought you said they were little girls only six, or ten, or twelve years old?"

"They would have been little girls in America," was the reply, "but in India they were women. A Hindoo father is anxious to marry his daughters

almost before they can walk; this is part of his religion. If he gets his daughter married before she is six years old, he is promised the highest place in the Hindoo heaven; if before seven, the next highest place; but if his daughter remains unmarried until she is ten or twelve, he has the lowest place of all."

"Only think," said Minnie, whose thoughts seemed to dwell upon this subject, "of a little girl only as old as I, and even younger, being called 'Mrs.,' like mamma!"

This amused Harry very much, and he declared that Minnie's head was an inch or two higher as she thought that if she were living in India she might be called "Mrs.," like mamma.

"What did all these married ladies do?" asked Harry; "were they very quiet and good in school, or did they cut up sometimes?"

"They were generally very good," replied his grandmamma, "and they were paid a pice a day for coming to school."

"Well, that was a funny school," said Minnie, "to pay the scholars for coming to learn! I thought that the scholars' parents always had to pay the teachers."

"They do, usually," said Mrs. Wildford, "but

it was hard to get the Hindoo children into the schools, and especially the girls. The women there were never taught anything, and could not even read in their own language, and the missionaries were so anxious to teach the poor things that they willingly paid them this trifle for coming to school. A piee is an Indian coin of copper worth about a cent of your money. I will show you one."

The children pressed eagerly forward to examine the coins which their grandmamma took from one of the drawers in the little cabinet, and found that, with the exception of one, they were very nice and smooth-looking. This rough one was a native Hindoo coin, also called a pice, and just a little less in value than the pice coined in the government mint. A silver coin about the size of a three-cent piece was marked, "Two Annas," and another, of the same precious metal, bore the stamp, "One Rupee." This was about the size of an American half dollar, and a few cents less in value. There was also a native rupee, as rough-looking as the copper coin, that was found afterward quite in a corner by itself.

"A dying Hindoo gave me this," said Mrs. Wildford, "many, many years ago, and begged me

to keep it as long as I lived to remember that I had shown him the way to the Saviour. I think it was all he had."

Minnie took the rough rupee in her hand again, and felt glad to think that the poor man had now no need of silver or gold in the blessed country where he had gone.

"Did the children like to come to school?" asked Harry, presently.

"Yes," was the reply; "they seemed to like it very much, and they took a great deal of pleasure in the singing. Just before school was dismissed they always sang a little hymn in the Mahratta language which said they must not be late at school, and that when they went home they must not quarrel by the way, but must be kind to each other. It also told them to come to school again with clean hands and faces and hair nicely combed. They had combs given to them for their own especial use."

"How I should like to hear them sing that!" said Minnie. "It must have been so funny."

Mrs. Wildford began to sing in a clear, sweet voice, that trembled a little as she thought of the past, the very hymn that the Mahratta children sang in that Bombay school, but to Harry

and Minnie it seemed very much like nonsense. All that they could make of the first line was, "Gunty wadseetur, apple-yard, gurree," and the remainder was very much in the same style.

They listened very attentively, and thanked their grandmamma for taking the trouble to sing for them, but they could not help thinking that they would have laughed to hear a roomful of children singing in such a funny way.

"Those strange Indian words do not seem at all funny to me," said Mrs. Wildford; "they seem very sweet, and oh what a blessed thought that some of the voices that joined in the simple hymn of the mission school are now singing the song of the redeemed in paradise!"

The children were quite silent for a time, but presently grandmamma said, "I must tell you about our own little house, for we did not stay long where we were taken at first, in the house occupied by other missionaries. It was not a very large house, but it was quite pleasant and comfortable; it was built of chunam and red brick."

"What is chunam?" asked Harry. "Is it a kind of wood?"

"No," was the reply; "it takes the place of

mortar, and is made of lime from pounded shells and sand. Our house was square, and it had some very nice rooms in it, but all those on the first floor were used for schoolrooms. We had quite a large garden with cocoanut and other palm trees in it, and some of the most beautiful flowers I have ever seen. The jessamine seems to grow everywhere in India, and the air was full of its fragrance."

"But weren't you dreadfully warm in your little house, grandmamma?" asked Minnie; "I have heard mamma say that it is so very hot in India."

"Yes," said Mrs. Wildford, "we were warm, certainly, but we expected this when we went to India. The rich English people who lived there kept themselves pretty comfortable with tatties and punkahs."

"Tatties?" repeated Harry, in a bewildered tone. "Why, mamma makes tatties, but I don't see what good that could do."

"Your mamma makes tatting, my dear, which would do no good at all, as it is only a narrow trimming, but a tattie is a large mat made of sweet-scented grass called kuskos and placed before an open door or window where the wind is strongest. A servant dashes water on the tattie from the outside, and when there is a good wind and the

servant is faithful to his work, the air of the room is made quite cool and pleasant. But often in India there is no wind at all, and the bheestie, or water-carrier, is always going to sleep unless he is watched, and then when he stops the room seems warmer than ever."

"What was the other thing, grandmamma?" said Minnie—"punk something."

"The punkah, Minnie, is an immense fan near the ceiling of the room, which is moved by a cord that goes through the wall to the verandah. The servant who attends to this stands or sits in the verandah and pulls the string."

"Why didn't you have tatties and punkahs, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, sorrowfully.

"Because, my dear child, we were missionaries, and could not afford to keep servants enough to attend to these luxuries. If we had spent our money thus we could not have supported two or three native children in the boarding-school, which it was our pleasure to do. But we kept our doors and windows tightly closed all day, and after a while we began to get used to the heat. When night came, I think a little girl I know would have screamed occasionally had she been there."

"Tell me about it, grandmamma," said Harry,

quite gleefully. "I really hope you saw something dreadful."

"Nothing more dreadful than bats," replied his grandmother, "and all sorts of bugs and insects that came flying in in swarms as soon as the cocoa-nut-oil lamp was lighted."

"I think that bats are horrible!" said Minnie, with a shudder. "I had one in my hair once."

"Didn't he have a good time," laughed Harry, "in all that mop of yours! It was in the country, grandmamma, and Minnie pranced round just like this, screaming, 'Oo! oo! oo!' and we could scarcely catch her or the bat either. Oh, it was such fun!"

Minnie laughed herself, although she looked rather disposed to cry, and grandmamma found it impossible to keep from smiling at Harry's comic mimicry, but she patted the flushed little face very kindly, while Harry kissed the pout from the red lips.

"I think," said Mrs. Wildford, "that Minnie would not have much hair left if an Indian bat once grasped it, they are such huge creatures, and as all the flying things appeared to think that our lamp had been lighted for their express benefit, we had quite a lively time with them."

"What did you do, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, in a tone of dismay at this flying assemblage.

"We got used to them, my dear; this was all that we could do with a great many things in India."

"Did you get used to the snakes, too, grandmamma?" said Harry.

"There were very few of them where I was to get used to," replied Mrs. Wildford. "You probably think, as I did before I went to India, that the country is almost carpeted with snakes, but I had been there several years before I saw one."

"Can't you tell us about the snake-charmers?" asked Harry, who felt quite disappointed at this account.

"I can only tell you," was the reply, "that a party of these jugglers once came to us and told us that there were snakes under our house, asking permission to charm them out, but your grandfather would not allow it."

"Why, that was strange," said Minnie; "did grandpapa want the snakes to stay there?"

"No, my dear, but these jugglers probably brought the snakes with them, and after performing their incantations they would have pretended

that they came from under our house, and then have demanded money for getting them out."

"Grandmamma," said Harry, suddenly, "you did see alligators and crocodiles, didn't you? I remember reading about the mothers in India throwing their little children to the crocodiles."

"That was on the banks of the Ganges, Harry. I am sorry to disappoint you so often, but you must remember that Bombay is on the ocean, and alligators and crocodiles live in the rivers. Perhaps you would like to hear something about the heathen temples?"

"Oh yes, indeed!" exclaimed Minnie; "please tell us how the poor heathen prayed to their gods."

"We visited a heathen temple soon after our arrival," continued Mrs. Wildford, "and a number of people came in and brought little offerings, often of rice, which they set down before their god. Would you like to see some of these gods or idols?"

The children examined the small brass and clay images which their grandmother placed before them as she said,

"The idols in the temples were very much larger than these; such as these were often carried about on men's heads for sale, just as, in this country,

they carry plaster images. This is only done before idols have been consecrated, or the god brought into them by a Brahmin pundit. Until this is done they are not considered sacred, and they are given as toys to children, and used to ornament rooms."

There was quite a variety of idols; one was sitting cross-legged, with an elephant's head; one standing with folded hands and the face of an ape, and one with a staff, and something in the other hand that looked like the handle of a drawer.

"That fellow is making a face!" said Harry, presently; "he's as ugly as sin."

"Unfortunately," replied his grandmother, "sin is not always ugly in appearance; it would be better, perhaps, to say that this idol is as hideous as sin really is in the eyes of God. But what do you think of a bit of painted stone for a god, Harry?"

It was a good-sized pebble painted of a bright vermilion color, and an inscription on it said that it had been consecrated for worship by daubing it with koonkoo.

"After the ceremony of consecration," said Mrs. Wildford, "the god was supposed to be inside of the stone, and so the poor blind Hindoos wor-

shiped it. One of their gods is called Siva, one Rama, one Theli, one Doorga, but then they have so many, it would be impossible for me to tell you the half of them. This idol whose ugliness seems especially to strike you, Harry, is a mendicant priest, or Brahmin who has spent his life in begging, who has bathed in the sacred waters of the Ganges, and now that he is dead, he is worshiped as a god."

"Are their temples like our churches, grandmamma?" asked Minnie.

"No, my dear; they are not at all like them. Here is a picture of the inside of one of their temples or pagodas."

It was a rough painting on common paper, done in gaudy colors of red, and blue, and yellow, with a globe or ball on the top, and in the centre the figure of a woman with four arms and feet. She was decked with innumerable chains and jewels, and underneath was written: "The Goddess Doorga, wife of Siva, in her temple."

"And there is the mark on her forehead," said Minnie, who remembered about the little girls in school, "to show that she is somebody's wife. But what are all these people doing in the lower part of the picture, grandmamma? See! there is a

woman lying on her back, with her hands like little Samuel's in the nursery, and a man has a great bowl of fish on his head, and another woman has a basket of fruit, and some men are blowing trumpets, and every one seems to be making a great noise."

"They are going to the temple with offerings to the goddess, and the woman on the ground is the wife of some rich Hindoo who is probably praying for a child. She is dragging herself along in that way instead of walking, to please the goddess and make her listen to her prayer. She has hired all the other people to help her. It is very seldom," continued Mrs. Wildford, "that many people are assembled at one time in these temples. Three or four times a day the priests beat their gongs in honor of the idols, and on some festival occasions they light up the buildings and have some very beautiful fireworks. I have sometimes seen the towers of a pagoda ornamented with hangings of gilt paper, tinsel and flowers, while the greatest din imaginable was being made with gongs, bells and musical instruments. When the people go into their temples to pray, they first ring some bells in front of their god to make him hear and let him know that they are speaking to him."

"Just as mamma rings for Thomas or Sarah," said Harry.

"It seems very much like it," continued his grandmother, "and then they repeat the name of the god a great many times; one favorite name, Rama, they say so fast that it sounds like Ramram-ram. Do you remember Elijah, and the false prophets who called upon Baal from morning until noon, saying, 'O Baal, hear us'?"

Mrs. Wildford had opened the Bible at the eighteenth chapter of 1 Kings, and she read: "'And they cried aloud, and cut themselves, after their manner, with knives and lancets, till the blood gushed out upon them.'"

"Did they really do that, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, in horror.

"They did a great many dreadful things, my child," was the reply, "which they supposed would please their gods, but now the blessed light of the gospel has taught many of them better. I have sometimes slept in the court of a heathen temple, Minnie, when I have been traveling in India, for there were no hotels, only rest-houses, as they were called, built by government at every twenty-five miles on the highway. The Hindoos will not allow any one to enter what they call the sacred

part of their temples, where the idol sits on its throne, but, with my mat to lie upon, I have enjoyed a comfortable sleep on the floor."

"I should think you would have been afraid," said Minnie, shuddering.

"Of what, my child? Is not God everywhere? He is even in a heathen temple, though they see him not, because their eyes are blinded. Slaves are fearful, Minnie, but not those whom Christ has made free."

Harry went quite to the other extreme, and said that he thought it would be jolly to sleep in a temple, and that he'd spend the night in making faces at the hideous-looking idol. Which, as Master Harry always went to sleep as soon as his head touched the pillow, was not at all likely.

"I wish now to tell you of the different kinds of false religion that we found in India," said Mrs. Wildford, "all of them opposed to the teachings of the gospel. Here is another picture, Harry. Can you tell me what it is?"

"Isn't it another temple, grandmamma?"

"Yes; it is a Mussulman or Mohammedan temple, called a mosque. You will remember that I told you of the followers of the false prophet, Mohammed, and that the imaum of Muscat was a

Mohammedan, with his numerous wives and his house of prayer. These mosques are generally small in India, but they are often very pretty, and they usually have three little domes on top in place of a steeple. On the left side there is always a small recess where they keep the Koran, or Mohammedan Bible, and the front of the mosque is ornamented with arabesque, a pattern traced with black and gold. These Mussulmans quite look down upon the Hindoos, and will eat with none but those of their own religion. They are very devout in all its observances, and I have often thought it very beautiful when at sunrise I heard the cry from their mosques for Mohammedans to rise and pray, with the words, 'Prayer is better than sleep! prayer is better than sleep!'"

"Were there any other religions in India?" asked Harry.

"Yes," replied his grandmother; "there were the Parsees, or fire worshipers."

"Oh, grandmamma," exclaimed Minnie, "what dreadful people! Did they really throw themselves and their little children into the fire?"

"No, my dear little granddaughter, they did nothing of the kind; they were really very nice and harmless people. You have often noticed my

watching the sunset, Minnie; I love to see the last streaks of pink and gold fade into twilight, and since I have been in India I can never do this without thinking of the poor Parsee who kneels in worship to the declining sun and welcomes the sunrise in the same way. He worships the unknown God who thus shows his power in his works, and the zealous spirit of St. Paul would have been moved to say, 'Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you.'"

"But, grandmamma, I thought you said the Parsees were fire worshipers?"

"So they are, my child; they worship light in every form, for it represents to them the invisible God, and they profess to have the sacred fire they brought with them from Persia a thousand years ago still burning in one of their temples. A Parsee servant will never put out a light, and he would, therefore, be somewhat expensive where gas is used, but in India they arrange the cocoanut-oil lamps to burn just the time for which they are wanted, and then they go out of themselves. The Parsee children are often beautiful, and always richly dressed, and the Parsee merchants bear a better character than any of the Indian traders. The Parsee is distinguished from the Hindoo by

his peculiar, flat-looking turban of dark, spotted muslin, unless he is a priest, and then he wears a white one. They do not burn the bodies of the dead, as the Hindoos do, nor bury them, like the Christians, but leave them in an open place to be devoured by vultures and other birds of prey. This is the most revolting practice that I know of the Parsees."

"Oh, grandmamma," said Minnie, burying her head in her grandmamma's lap to hide the tears that were trickling down her cheeks, "I am so glad that I live in a Christian country! When little brother Bennie died, it was in the country, you know, and I remember all about it; his grave was so pretty, full of green branches and lovely flowers, and when they laid him there, it seemed as if he was only going to sleep for a while. But to be eaten up by those dreadful birds!"

Harry tried to keep back his tears, because he feared it would not be manly to cry, but he had loved his little brother very tenderly, and he could not bear to see his sister in such distress. Minnie nestled up to the arm that he put around her, and Mrs. Wildford folded both the little ones in a loving clasp as she said,

"The dark places of the earth are indeed full of

cruelty—cruelty to the living and dishonor to the dead—and we must not sit idly weeping over them, but do with our might what our hands find to do."

"Do you think I ought to go and be a missionary, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, in a terrified tone.

She felt sure that she would be eaten up, or stung by scorpions, or that something dreadful would be in store for her.

Grandmamma laughed:

"Not now, Minnie; I think that you and Harry ought to be home missionaries."

The children looked very much surprised at this; they did not know of any heathen at home, and Harry had a suspicion that he was not exactly qualified for a teacher.

"We can be missionaries in a measure," continued Mrs. Wildford, "by our daily example, our patience in bearing little crosses, our forbearance under provocation, and then, too, those of us who stay at home can help the missionaries who go by sending them whatever we can spare from our many comforts."

"Grandmamma," said Minnie, eagerly, "I have ten cents a week to spend; shall I give it to you for the missionaries?"

"Not all of it, I think," was the reply; "suppose you give half of it, and see how well you can do without that?"

Minnie was rather disappointed; she thought it would be so much more generous to give all she had at once.

"I have five dollars," said Harry, stoutly. "I mean to give it all to the heathen, grandmamma."

"You must first ask your mother's permission," replied Mrs. Wildford, "and I would advise you to think it well over, and be quite sure that you will not regret it afterward."

"Well, grandmamma is funny!" said Harry as the children were going down stairs. "I thought she would like to have all the money we could give her for the missionaries, but I will give my five dollars, for I know that mamma will let me."

"Yes," Mrs. Bolton said; "she was quite willing that the children should give whatever they pleased of their own to the missionaries, but they must not fancy that they were giving it to grandmamma, or that grandmamma had urged them to do it, and they must remember, too, that the money once given could not be taken back."

The children laughed at this idea, and ran off gleefully to collect all their funds.

"Sarah," said Minnie, quite importantly, "we are going to give all our money to the heathen, who are very wicked, and I think you ought to give some, too. I heard mamma say the other day that you spent too much on ribbons."

"Well, Miss Minnie," replied Sarah, tossing her head, "the money that I spend is my own, honestly earned, and I don't see, for my part, why wicked people should have money given 'em. I'd rather spend mine on my back."

"Dear me!" said Minnie, in a fluster at her failure; "I don't believe I've said it right. It's the missionaries who teach the heathen that want the money, and you're real wicked yourself, Sarah, not to help them."

"I guess your goodness won't last long, miss," replied the girl. "You'll want some candy or oranges, and then you'll wish you had your money."

Minnie was too indignant to speak, except to tell Sarah that she was "real hateful," which did not look much like beginning her missionary work in a right spirit.

CHAPTER V.

IN THE CONCAN.

A VISIT to grandmamma's room had now come to be a thing of almost daily occurrence with the little Boltons, and Mrs. Wildford enjoyed their eager, animated questions and their evident interest in all that related to her missionary life. She did not know but that these two children, if spared, might yet go forth bearing the precious seed of the gospel to heathen lands, in answer to her daily prayer that the Lord of the harvest would send forth laborers into his vineyard.

So grandmamma was never too busy to attend to them, and never weary of telling them all they wanted to know, and the children felt it quite a satisfaction to be so sure of this.

"Now, grandmamma," said Minnie, the evening after they had heard about the idols and the false religions, "what comes next?"

"I do not quite know, little granddaughter, what really comes next: there is so much to tell that it is

not easy to tell it in regular order; but I think that this evening I will give you an account of our journey to the Concan. This is a province not very far from Bombay; it lies between the Western Ghauts, a range of mountains, and the Arabian Sea. We went there by water, for Bombay, you may remember my telling you, is on a small island. It is now connected with the main land by a pier, or causeway, but when I was in India, we could go only by water. This journey was not for pleasure, but to further our missionary work; we went to visit the schools in that part of the country, and to preach to the people whom we could gather by the way. We went in what is called a bundar-boat."

"What was it like, grandmamma?" asked the children.

"It was more like a gondola than anything else," was the reply, "but as this is an Italian boat, and you have never seen one, you will want this explained, too. Our boat, then, had one small room, which was given to us, and outside there was an open space for the lascars, or sailors. Part of the time our boat was rowed, and part of the time they used a sail. It only took a few hours to get to Allabag, the place where we were going, but to see our preparations and the things we had to carry

with us, you would have supposed that we were moving. We had to take nearly everything we ate, besides clothes to wear and things to sit upon and sleep upon, things to cook with, books to read and all our servants besides. These were only four in number."

"Only four!" repeated Minnie, with very large eyes; "why, grandmamma, that is all we keep, and just see how many more there are of us!"

"Our four," replied her grandmother, smiling at her earnestness, "were just about equal to one good American domestic. In India even the servants are of various castes, or ranks, and one servant will scorn to do tasks that another will willingly perform. This makes it necessary to have a great many of them, even for a small family."

"Well, grandmamma," said Harry, who was eager for adventures, "you got into this bundle-boat, or whatever it was; what did you do then?"

"Bundur-boat, Harry—a name given to that peculiar kind of boat which could be hired to go wherever we wished. Our lascars, who were engaged to remain with us during the entire trip, were Mohammedans, and their dark skins and white turbans formed a strong contrast. I could

not help thinking that the yards of muslin twisted up into turbans would have been put to better use in covering their almost naked bodies. Our own servants were required to wear the ungrekah, a loose white robe with flowing sleeves, as a condition of their entering our service."

"It must have been awful hot there to wear anything," said Harry, reflectively. "I guess I should have wanted to kick all my clothes off too, grandmamma."

"Perhaps, as a witty writer once said, you would have liked to take off your flesh and sit in your bones, Harry, but we could not have recognized you as a respectable member of society. One of the first results of Christian civilization is a decent covering for the body, but these people could not be said to kick their clothes off, as they never had any to put on—a custom that is universal among the heathen in warm countries. It was quite amusing for us to watch these sailors at their dinners, which they ate by themselves, for a Mohammedan will not eat with any one of a different religion."

"What did they have for dinner, grandmamma?" asked Harry. "Do they eat rats and such things?"

"My little boy is thinking of the Chiuese," replied Mrs. Wildford. "Rats would be as great an abominatiou to the Mussulmans as they would be to us. Their dinner consisted of rice aud currie."

"Is that sweetmeats?" asked Minnie.

"You would scarcely think so," was the reply, "if you got some of it into your mouth. Curric is a very sharp sauce made of peppers and spices, but the people of India could scarcely make a meal without it, and even the English who go there become very fond of it. The rice was in oue large dish, and the lascars sat cross-legged around it, each with his sauce-boat of currie, and making a hole with his finger in the portion of rice nearest to him, he poured in his currie and ate all around it, using his fingers instead of fork or spoon."

Minnie was looking very much disgusted, and her grandmother said, "I think you would not have cared to share their feast, Miunie, aud I am quite sure that the Mussulmans wonld not have asked you. We sailed directly across the harbor of Bombay, which is very beautiful, with a view of the Ghauts mountains in the distance, and then we were rowed up an arm of the sea until we came to the town, or village, of Allabag, that belonged to a part of the Concan. This was

governed by a rajah and his dewan, or prime minister. When we reached our landing-place, the boat could not go within several yards of the shore, and a stout lascar took me in his arms, while another seized your grandfather, and wading more than knee-deep in the water, they carried us safely to land. We went directly to our bungalow, which the servants soon got in readiness for us, and in a very short time we were settled at housekeeping in a place we had never seen before."

"Then the bungalow was the house, wasn't it?" asked Harry.

"Yes; a low Indian house, with a thatched roof, over which flowering vines climbed and made it very pretty. I did not know until after our return that the thatched roof and the vines were favorite nests for a small green snake whose bite is very poisonous. I was fortunate enough never to see or feel one. Our bungalow had a verandah of bamboo all around it, and a bamboo thicket was close to the house. The foliage of the bamboo is very pretty, and forms a sort of bower wherever it grows. There were cocoanut, peepul and betel trees at the back of the house; the leaves of the peepul are very dark, so that many of these trees together have a gloomy look. The betel is a tall, slender species

of palm, with a beautifully white bark, and the nuts are used by the natives for chewing, as tobacco is with us."

"Were there banyan trees, too, grandmamma?—those large, queer trees that grow with their branches taking root in the ground? I've seen pictures of them."

"Not near our bungalow, Harry, but the banyan tree is quite common in India. I once saw one that covered three acres of ground and formed a grove of itself."

"How pleasant it must have been to walk in it," said Minnie, "when it was so warm!"

"It was not a very pleasant place to be in," replied her grandmother, "because it was not clean. The banyan grove was filled with multitudes of birds who kept it very dirty; they ate the small figs that grow on the tree, and scattered them all over the ground. Places where birds congregate are never clean, and I had no desire, Minnie, to cool myself off under the banyan tree. It is often hard to tell the original tree from the branches; sometimes it dies, but there are so many other roots from the branches that it is not missed. Animals frequently eat their outer roots, and sometimes a fence is raised to protect the banyan. The Hindoos

look upon the tree as sacred, and they plant it sometimes when a child is born to them or a great event happens; in that case it is always protected by a fence. We liked our bungalow very much," continued Mrs. Wildford, "for it was pleasantly situated on the seashore, and we had a nice cool breeze. The country around was very pretty, and it seemed much pleasanter than Bombay."

"Then why didn't you stay there, grandmamma?" asked Harry. "I would have stayed."

"Then you would not be fit for a missionary, Harry, if you stayed only where it was most pleasant. We had been sent to Bombay, and our home and our work were there; we never thought of changing, but we enjoyed all the pleasant things that came to us in the way of duty. The very evening that we arrived at Allabag, we had a message from the dewan, who, I told you, was the rajah's prime minister, that he would be pleased to receive a visit from us, and the next morning a palanquin was sent for me and a horse for your grandfather. The dewan's house was built around a court with a fountain in the middle, and there was a fine garden which we had plenty of time to examine, for the great man was a long while making his appearance. A guard of soldiers in white

ELEPHANT WITH HOWDAH AND TRAPPINGS.

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dresses, with swords, and shields, and guns, was stationed near the house, and one of the officers came forward very politely to show us the grounds. And now, Harry," continued his grandmother, "I think you will be pleased, for almost the first things we saw were a number of elephants in a cocoanut grove, fastened with iron chains to the trees. There must have been eight or ten of them."

"Did they look like the elephants in the menageries?" asked Harry, with great interest.

"Very much as one horse looks like another," was the reply, "but we do not see quite so many of them at once in a menagerie. This grove might have been called the dewan's stable, for his elephants were used in place of horses on state occasions, and we were told that they had very rich trappings and howdahs."

"I know what they are," said Harry, eagerly—"the little houses on their backs that people sit in. Oh, grandmamma, didn't you get on an elephant?"

"No, Harry; I had not the least ambition to be perched up so high, but I can read to you what Bishop Heber says of riding on an elephant; he tried it."

The children were all attention while Mrs. Wildford read from the "Journey through India:"

"'At Barrackpoor, for the first time, I mounted an elephant, the motion of which I thought far from disagreeable, though very different from that of a horse. As the animal moves both feet on the same side at once, the sensation is like that of being carried on a man's shoulders. A full-grown elephant carries two persons in the howdah, besides the mohout, or driver, who sits on his neck, and a servant on the crupper behind with an umbrella. I was amused by one peculiarity which I had never before heard of: while the elephant is going on, a man walks by his side, telling him where to tread, bidding him 'take care; step out,' warning him that the road is rough, slippery, etc., all which the animal is supposed to understand and take his measures accordingly. The mohout says nothing, but guides him by pressing his legs to his neck on the side to which he wishes him to turn, urging him forward with the point of a formidable goad, and stopping him by a blow on the forehead with the butt end of the same instrument.'

"The bishop also saw twenty elephants bathing at once," she continued, "and he speaks of the noise they made as like the blowing of a whale."

"Were there any more animals in that place, grandmamma?" asked Minnie.

"Yes, my dear, there were several kinds in different parts of the grounds."

"Tigers?" asked Harry, with fresh interest.

"No," replied Mrs. Wildford; "I did not see a tiger all the time that I was in India, and I cannot say that I felt at all unhappy about it. I believe that very few people do see them, except those who go on tiger-hunts. Quite at the other end of the dewan's garden there were a number of monkeys, also fastened with chains. These kept up a great chattering, and looked and acted very much like human beings. There were some beautiful deer, too, in another place, and their large, soft eyes were fixed upon us so long as we remained in sight. Close to the house were large cages in which were many beautiful tropical birds that flew about and seemed disposed to show their fine plumage to the best advantage. These birds had so many bright colors about them that they were more like living rainbows than anything else."

"Why didn't you bring some of these beautiful birds home with you, grandmamma?" said Minnie; "I should like to have one very much."

"I had a great many more useful things to bring

over the ocean," was the reply, "and a bird that was alive then would not do my little granddaughter much good now. Besides, dear, I did not know then that I should ever have a little granddaughter. Are you satisfied with my reasons, Minnie?"

"She is trying not to laugh," shouted Harry, "but I see the dimples coming! What a little goose you are, Minnie!"

Grandmamma looked very lovingly on the little goose as she continued: "When we had looked at all that was to be seen outside, the dewan appeared and led us into the reception-room, that opened on the court, but we did not see much of his house, as he was a Hindoo, and the Hindoos do not like to have strangers in their homes. This dewan was also a Brahmin, or priest, which is the very highest rank among the Hindoos. The Brahmins are sometimes worshiped as gods, even while living, and when they appear abroad, the poor ignorant people fall down on their knees before them. But the influence of Christianity has, in a great measure, destroyed their power in many parts of India, and a Brahmin of the present day is not at all the high and mighty personage that people thought him when I was in India. The Brahmins and the men of

their family, or caste, wear a peculiar cord, called the Brahminical string; this is made of twisted cotton, and passes around the neck and under the left arm. They are the best educated and most intelligent of the Hindoos, and some of them are very learned. The Brahmin whom we went to see was a tall, fine-looking man, quite light colored for a Hindoo, but he was disfigured by the marks of his god on his forehead."

"What was that, grandmamma? Had he cut himself?"

"No, my child; he had painted cross-lines on his forehead with such clay as this."

Mrs. Wildford showed the children what looked like a stick of gray chalk, and then continued:

"The Jews, you know, wore phylacteries—bands of ribbon or linen on which were written words of Scripture; and what is the beautiful verse, Minnie, that you learned last Sunday?"

The little girl repeated: "And they shall see his face, and his name shall be in their foreheads."

"This is from the Revelation of St. John," said her grandmother, "and in another chapter the mark of the beast is spoken of. It was this that the poor Brahmin bore, and oh how I wished, as I looked upon him, that the mark of Christ might

be written in its place. When we had entered the square hall that opened upon the court, we sat down on an English sofa, while the dewan placed himself in a large arm-chair near us. The furniture was all English; there was nothing Oriental but the court and the fountain and the dewan himself. By this time we could speak the language quite well, and we were very glad to be able to converse with the Hindoo priest. He began by asking us where we lived and what had brought us to India. We described America to him as plainly as we could until he seemed to get some idea of it, and then we told him how we had been sent as missionaries to Bombay to preach to the Hindoos Christ crucified, and to teach the people also many things besides that would be useful for them to know."

"But didn't he get angry, grandmamma, when he was a priest, and thought so much of his gods, to have you talk about teaching the people another religion?"

"No, Harry; he showed no signs of anger, but heard us very patiently, and seemed quite interested in what we said. We spoke the truth without fear, for we felt that He who was with us was mightier far than all who could be against us, but

we always endeavored to speak it gently and courteously, and this won for us a hearing instead of rousing anger in those who differed with us. The dewan saw that we were very much in earnest; he knew that we had left our home and friends and journeyed thousands of miles, not for gain to ourselves, like the merchants who went there, but to do what we believed our God required of us, and perhaps the poor man wondered if he could do all this for his god."

"Was he like the other man, grandmamma, that you went to see when mamma screamed so?"

"No, Minnie; he was a much finer-looking man than the imaum of Muscat, and more intelligent. When he asked us what else we had to teach, your grandfather gave him a geography in the Hindostance language, which he read, and with which he seemed very much pleased, and then we told him that I would teach the women how to sew and to make their homes more comfortable. He did not object to this, but asked us what brought us to the rajah's dominions when we had been sent to Bombay. We told him that we came to look at the mission schools there and see how they prospered, and to talk with the people whenever we could get the chance. The dewan smiled, perhaps

because we did not try to deceive him in this matter, and said that his master, the rajah, would probably send for us. We hoped that he would, for we were quite anxious to see his majesty and as many of the people in authority as possible."

"I think you were very brave," said Harry. "How did you know but that they would kill you?"

"Harry," said his grandmother, "did you ever hear of the old colored man who was preaching on faith, and in explaining it to his hearers said that if he saw in the Bible that God wanted him to jump through a stone wall, he should go right to work and jump at it? Jumping at it, he said, belonged to him, but going through it belonged to God. We were jumping at our stone wall, and like the old colored man, we left the going through it to God. We asked the Brahmin if he would accept one of our Shasters, and he seemed to take with pleasure the Hindostance Bible that we had brought with the fear that we might have to take it back with us. It was sowing seed, however rocky the soil, and we knew that God, and God alone, could give the increase. Soon after this a servant brought in a small silver dish carefully covered, and taking a very small spoon that came with it, the dewan dipped out a few drops of

attar of roses and put it on our handkerchiefs. He then took a beautiful silver bottle filled with rose-water and sprinkled us with this through a small hole in the stopper."

"How very funny!" exclaimed the children; "what did he do such queer things for, grandmamma?"

"This was considered a polite attention," replied Mrs. Wildford, "and quite a mark of respect in India. Here is one of the rose-water bottles, with the hole in the stopper for sprinkling; your mother broke the mate to it when she was a little girl. This, you see, is of very thin blue glass, with an arabesque pattern in gold; the color is very beautiful when I hold it up to the light. Here is a bottle for attar of roses."

The children examined with interest what looked like a little tube of thick glass with gilt stars on it and something like quicksilver inside that ran about three-quarters of the length.

"That," said their grandmother, "is the little vessel that holds the precious attar, and see how carefully the stopper is protected with all this kid. The attar is very powerful, but it will evaporate unless carefully corked. I have had this many years, but you will see that it is quite strong yet."

Harry inhaled the attar to its full extent, and then called it "horrid stuff," while a very slight whiff of it made his delicate little sister feel quite faint.

"Why do you call it precious, grandmamma?" asked Minnie; "isn't there plenty of it in India?"

"No, my dear," was the reply; "it would be necessary to grow nothing but roses there to have it plentiful, and I am sure the poor people would not give up their rice for attar of roses. Shall I tell you something about this attar, and how it is made?"

"Please do, grandmamma!" was the animated reply.

"Ghazepoor," continued Mrs. Wildford, "is the rose district of India. I never was there myself; it is a long distance from Bombay, in the northern part of India. It is quite a large town, and in and around it are acres and acres of beautiful roses, which are cultivated solely for the purpose of making attar of roses and rose-water. The rose-water is made by distilling the roses, and then it is put into large jars without any covers and set out in the night air. By morning there is a thick oil, just like the cream on milk, which floats on the top and is skimmed carefully

off and put by itself. This is the attar, and rose-water that has been skimmed does not bring so high a price as the other. But it is really very good, though a quart of the best could be had, when I was in India, for about twenty-five cents. You can understand why attar should be precious when I tell you that two hundred thousand roses will only make a small quantity of it. This may be called a sinful luxury, when we think how many starving bodies and souls the cost of it would help to feed. The ceremony of perfuming visitors signifies that the visit is drawing to a close, and we took leave of the dewan with many thanks for his kind permission to go about where we pleased without fear of being molested."

CHAPTER VI.

MISSIONARY WORK.

THERE was a great commotion in the Bolton house, a sound of scampering, laughing and screaming from the lower regions, and such an excitement generally that Mrs. Bolton went to the head of the stairs and demanded the cause of the disturbance.

"Oh, mamma," cried Harry, who could scarcely speak for laughing, "do come down here in the dining-room!"

"Bow wow!" said something.

"Ugh!" screamed Minnie.

"He's so cunning! Please come and look at him."

Very much surprised at such extraordinary sounds, and wondering what fresh piece of mischief Harry had been guilty of, his mother entered the dining-room, to find Minnie standing on a chair with her skirts gathered about her, Harry on his hands and knees, very red in the face, a black

Newfoundland puppy plunging about with very awkward antics, and a dirty-looking boy with his hands in his pockets and his cap far down on his head gazing at the party without a smile.

"What does all this mean?" asked Mrs. Bolton as the puppy rushed at her with a fresh bark of welcome. "Where did this dog and this boy come from?"

"I'm afraid of him," said Minnie, nestling up to her mother.

"Then go up stairs, daughter," was the reply; "he certainly will not hurt any one, but he is making a great deal of noise in the house, and I am afraid that he will disturb your grandmother. How came you to bring him here, Harry?"

"Why, mamma, I met this boy as I was coming home from school, and when I stopped to look at the dog, he told me that he wanted to sell him. You'll let me keep him here, won't you?"

"But I cannot give you any money at present to pay for the dog," said his mother. "What does the boy ask for him?"

"Five dollars," replied that individual, promptly, with his keen eyes fixed upon the lady.

"I am going to pay for him myself, mamma," continued Harry, eagerly, "with that five dollars

Uncle Harry gave me. Say 'Yes,' will you, mamma?"

"Why, Harry," replied his mother, "what are you thinking of? You gave your five dollars to the missionaries a week ago. You will remember that I told you to think it well over, but you felt quite sure that you were willing to do without it."

"Hang the missionaries!" burst from Harry's lips, and then he stood the picture of shame under his mother's reproving gaze.

The young dog merchant burst into a loud laugh, whistled to the puppy, and both disappeared so quickly that the next moment there was nothing but the wag of a tail in the distance.

"Harry," said Mrs. Bolton, "how would your grandmother feel to hear what you have said?"

"Please don't tell her, mamma," pleaded Harry, fairly crying. "I didn't mean it, indeed I didn't. I had forgotten all about giving my five dollars to the missionaries, and you don't know how I wanted that dog. I was going to call him Wag because he shakes himself around so funnily, and I meant to teach him ever so many tricks. He can beg beautifully now on his hind paws."

"I am very sorry that all this has happened," con-

tinued his mother, gravely, "and I scarcely know what is best to do about it. It is no generosity or charity to give all that one has on the impulse of the moment and then want it back again. I have a great mind to return your five dollars, Harry, from my own purse, and forbid your giving anything away for some time to come."

"Mamma," said Harry, mournfully, "I'll try never to do so again, but it would be so mean to take back the money. Please don't make me; I really don't care so much about Wag, after all."

Mrs. Bolton sent Harry up stairs for the present, and said that she would decide what it was best to do.

Mrs. Wildford told the children that evening that she was quite ready to go on with her visit to Allabag, but it was with a very shamefaced air that Harry took his usual seat. He wondered, if grandmamma should hear of what he said, whether she would have him in her room at all.

"Did they have schools in that place like the schools in Bombay, grandmamma," asked Minnie, "where the children were taught about the Saviour?"

"Yes," was the reply; "there were two such schools at Allabag, and very pleasant we found it

to visit them and see what progress the scholars made in the word of God. They could say the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in Mahratta, with many verses of Holy Scripture, and I gathered several of the little girls about me one morning at the end of the verandah, and heard them their lessons and talked to them of the blessed Saviour who loved them and wished them to be his children. The teacher's house, where the school was held, was in one of the busy streets of the town, where people were constantly passing, and soon a wondering crowd of women were gathered about the verandah, the most of them carrying burdens of fruit, water, fish or rice. There must have been twenty of them standing there and looking at me in perfect astonishment. 'Why, why,' they exclaimed, at length, 'she is a woman!'"

"What did they think you were, grandmamma?" asked Harry, laughing.

"They could not tell," replied Mrs. Wildford, "for they had never seen a white woman before; the teachers at Allabag were all men, and they could not understand how a woman should know anything. The poor things had not been allowed to learn, for their schools were only for boys. I

began to speak to them in their own language, and their amazement increased. I asked them if they could read. 'Oh no!' they replied, 'we cannot read; we are women.' It was so sad that they should think this reason enough for their ignorance, and I told them that I could read in Mahratta, though I did not know a word of their language before I came to the country. They could scarcely believe it, and asked me where I lived. I told them that I lived across the ocean, but that I had heard in my distant home how little they knew, and how they worshiped gods of wood and stone and did many foolish and wicked things, and I felt so sorry for them that I left my native land and took that long journey to tell them of the true God who sent his only Son to die for them."

"What did the poor Hindoo women say, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, who was very much interested in what she called "beginning to be a missionary."

"They said very little except that they did not know of any of these things: no one had ever told them; and taking their burdens up again, they called me 'Madam Sahib,' which meant the wife of the master, and asked me if I would teach them more to-morrow. You may be sure that I gladly

consented, and I turned again to my little scholars with a thankful heart that God had given me work to do for him. While I was speaking to the women, your dear grandfather had been preaching to a group of men at the other end of the verandah, and their dusky faces were lifted to him with every mark of attention. It was blessed work, we said as we went back to our bungalow, and by God's grace we would only lay it down with our lives."

A tear fell on Minnie's hand, that lay clasped in her grandmamma's. Only one of the two had been laid to sleep in the land of their adoption, and the other, with shattered health and hopes, waited to join him in that better land where none would go out again for ever.

"I must tell you," said Mrs. Wildford, presently, "of our visit to a native school, which was, of course, quite different from the mission school, for only boys were received there, and the word of God was not taught. This school was in a native hut with a thatched roof, and nothing inside in the way of seats or furniture. The boys sat down on the floor, which was of earth, and the teacher stood before them with a cane to keep them in order. Their books were made of leaves from the palm tree tied together with a string of the same,

and the words were scratched on them with a sharp steel instrument. Their lessons were written in rhyme, and they sang them all in saying them."

"I'd like that," said Harry; "it must have been fun."

"It made a great noise," continued his grandmamma, "and nearly deafened us while we were trying to catch what they said. These boys seemed to be diligent scholars, but it was very sad to see only boys there. In these days of darkness many of the parents, if asked to send their daughters to school, would have answered, 'What for? Why should a girl learn to read? We want our women to take care of the house and cook rice for us; if they get silly notions about reading into their heads, they will not do their work well.' Even the mothers would have joined in this, but there is a great improvement in this matter now, and the light of the gospel has freed many poor women from such slavery. Do you remember that verse of the Bible which says that God giveth wisdom to the simple? There is a custom in these Hindoo schools that Christians might follow to advantage by praying to the true God. Before the boys began their lessons they were made to draw a figure

in the sand, on which they wrote instead of slates or a blackboard, and this figure was the trunk of an elephant. When they had done this, they made a low bow or salaam, and began to pray to the god which this figure represented—a monstrosity with the body of a boy and the head of an elephant. This god is called Gunputti or Ganesha, and as he is the god of wisdom, the boys were praying to him to make them wise through the lessons they were to recite that day."

Harry said that he thought they must have been very silly boys to say their prayers to the trunk of an elephant, and he was quite surprised when his grandmamma told him that they were not half so silly as those boys who had been brought up in the knowledge of the true God, and yet often neglected to pray at all.

"We kept our bundur-boat with us," continued Mrs. Wildford, "during the fortnight that we spent in the Concan, and making Allabag our head-quarters, we would often sail or row higher up the arm of the sea on which the town stands to visit other towns and villages. They were very much alike, and almost the same sort of crowd came out to gaze at us at every place. Among these there were always beggars, and a Hindoo beggar is

quite different from anything we see in this country."

"What is he like, grandmamma?"

"Like something so dreadful, Minnie, that it would make you quite sick to look at one. These poor people are subject to a great many terrible diseases, and a Hindoo thus afflicted considers himself set up in business at once. He has no further need of working, but goes about making a show of what we should think he would endeavor to hide. The more disgusting the disease or deformity, the higher the value he sets upon himself, and if people do not choose to give in what he considers a suitable proportion, he becomes very angry. There are a great many lepers in India—you have read in the Bible of that dreadful disease, which always shut the afflicted one out from others of his kind, and which seems peculiar to Eastern countries—many blind and many deformed persons, and whenever I saw some of these in the crowd about us, I thought of those blessed lips that, nearly two thousand years ago, preached to just such as these. Sometimes we would walk from one place to another if the distance were short, and then the people came out to stare at me."

"But why did they stare at you, grandmamma?"

asked Minnie. "Was it because they did not think it right for a lady to be walking in the street?"

"It was because they had never seen a white woman before, and they would really have liked to take hold of me to satisfy their curiosity. In this way I drew a large congregation together for your grandfather to preach to, and I was quite willing to be stared at if by that means we could do the poor people some good. The women peeped out through their veils from the doors of the houses, as Sarah did from her tent when Abraham entertained the angels, and oh how I wished to go and talk to them of the way of life! But they were very shy, being of a higher caste than the poor women who listened to me so attentively at Allabag, and they only looked upon me from a distance as a great curiosity. The Hindoos, as I have said, would rarely allow us to go into their houses, and once, when we had entered the courtyard of a nice-looking native house to leave some books at the door, the owner came out in a great hurry and requested us to leave the place; we were polluting it."

"I wish I had been there," said Harry, indignantly; "I would have knocked him down."

"That would not have been exactly the way to make him a Christian," replied his grandmother, smiling. "The poor man knew no better, and instead of feeling angry, we were sorry for him. Did not the people of Gadara request the Lord Jesus to depart out of their coasts when he had just performed a miracle of healing? The servant is not above his master, Harry, and none are more constantly reminded of this than missionaries to the heathen.

"I will show you where we traveled, Harry," continued Mrs. Wildford, "if you will hand me that little missionary map on the table. You see that here is the Mahratta province in Western India, here is Bombay on a very small island in the Arabian Sea close to the shore, and this long strip of land between the sea and the Ghauts mountains is called the Concan. This is where our journey lay, and you will see a number of little rivers coming out from arms of the sea, some of which we would have to cross to get to the places we wished to visit. But sometimes we went by land, and once I rode two miles on a musti pony."

"Why, grandmamma!" cried Harry, in amazement; "I never heard of such a thing! How could a pony get musty?"

Mrs. Wildford smiled at his surprised face as she said, "Perhaps when I tell you that musti is the Indian term for contrary, you will understand it better, and a very contrary animal indeed did my pony prove to be. He displayed the very reverse of a missionary spirit, for he would never go where we wished, and he often turned quite around and insisted upon returning. Then he would come to a stand-still, refusing to move either backward or forward, until the godswallah, the man who went with us to take care of the pony, gave him a beating from behind. We could not help laughing at his antics, although we found them so inconvenient, and it almost seemed as though he understood this, and, like some children I have seen, tried to show off. The saddle was a remarkable contrivance to American eyes, being made of white cotton stuffed, and then piled so high with layers of cloth that I was quite perched up in the air. It was a very insecure seat, too, and whenever the pony started suddenly, under the spur of the godswallah's beating, I rolled entirely off on the ground. I got quite used to this after a while, and I should not like to say how often it happened in the course of that two miles' ride."

The children laughed heartily at their grand-

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mamma's account of the "musty" pony, and they thought Harry's mistake extremely funny. Minnie enjoyed it all the more because it was she who usually made the mistakes and Harry who laughed at them.

"I do not think I have told you," continued their grandmamma, "of the animals which the Hindoos consider sacred. One of these is the bull, and we often met them grazing about the country, looking as fat and sleek as possible, and helping themselves quite coolly to whatever they happened to fancy. They are very fond of sugar, and one day a young bull put his nose into your grandfather's pocket, and discovering some sweetmeats there, had it half devoured before he was found out. Bulls who are left at large in this way are an offering to some god, and no one dares kill or injure them. The cow is also sacred, and is better treated than any other animal in India, probably more for the sake of the milk than for religion. The ape is sacred, too, and even the elephant is sometimes worshiped. As some one has said of India, 'There are gods in the temples, gods beside the highway, gods upon the tops of the hills, gods under the green trees, gods in the house, gods in the field; the air is full of them, so is the sea, so

are all things.' The Christian says that God is everywhere, and so does the Hindoo, but in a different way. His belief that God is everywhere leads him to worship animals because God made them. But notwithstanding this, they are often very cruel to animals, and although they will not allow a bullock to be killed, they will beat and ill-treat the poor beasts until killing them would be a mercy. The Hindoos even have hospitals for animals in some parts of India, but these are often very dirty and neglected, and the money given by kind-hearted people to support them is used by the Brahmins who are in charge of these places."

"I'd like to get hold of some of those Brahmins!" exclaimed Harry.

"We got hold of a few," replied his grandmamma, "but not in your style, Harry. An entire change of heart is needed before the fruits that a depraved heart brings forth can be destroyed effectually, and the right weapon to be used is the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

There was a loud call for "Harry!" and Mrs. Wildford said, "That is your uncle's voice; there seems to be quite a commotion down stairs."

Harry's heart beat fast; he heard the call, and also another sound that excited him still more.

Expecting he scarcely knew what, he bounded down three steps at a time, and there stood his Uncle Harry in the hall holding a chain, and at the end of the chain—Wag!

The dog barked joyously and began a series of delighted gambols at sight of Harry, but that young gentleman greeted his uncle with the unexpected remark: "Oh, Uncle Harry, I don't deserve him."

"Who said that you did?" was the reply, "and how do you know that he is for you?"

Harry glanced at his mother. Uncle Harry was always so full of his fun that he could scarcely tell whether he was joking or not.

"It depends altogether upon this lady," continued his uncle. "I have had enough of the rascal this afternoon at the office, where he almost tried to jump over the moon."

"A rather difficult feat in the day-time, I should think," said Mrs. Bolton.

"Oh, he is evidently a dog who won't stop at trifles, and for turning somersaults he is quite unrivaled. I bought him for you, Harry, of a little shaver about your own age."

Harry looked beseechingly, though he said not a word, and after a few moments' consideration, Mrs. Bolton consented to receive Wag as a member of

the family. Harry thanked her warmly, and also his uncle, who asked him quite comically:

"Have you been particularly bad, or only generally depraved, that you said you didn't deserve him?"

The boy's head hung down for a moment, and then he frankly told the whole story connected with Wag.

His uncle laughed immoderately, but Harry could not see anything very funny in it, and presently his mother told him that he could go and show the dog to his grandmamma if she would give him permission.

Mrs. Wildford smiled pleasantly as Harry appeared with his prize, and Wag testified his gratitude by breaking away from his master and bounding at the lady in a very ferocious style.

"Come here, sir!" said Harry, sternly, and on his way to obey the order the mischievous puppy stopped to attack Minnie, who had just followed her brother. The little girl behaved quite bravely, and smothered a scream just before it got out.

"Three cheers for you!" said Harry, gratefully. "He can't hurt you, puss, and if you go to screaming over him, mamma will send him out of the house."

Minnie promised to do her best, and she even tried to make a few advances to Wag, but when he bounded toward her, she edged up very closely to her grandmamma.

"Grandmamma," said Harry, with an effort, "I cannot bear to come in here any more without telling you what I said this morning. I forgot that I had given away my five dollars, and I brought the boy here with Wag, and when mamma told me that I had no money, I said, 'Hang the missionaries!'"

Mrs. Wildford laughed as she replied: "That is even worse than the Hindoos, Harry, whom you are so fond of condemning. I do not think I would be at all ornamental suspended from a tree; I am quite sure that I look better where I am."

"How horrible!" exclaimed Minnie, with her arms around her grandmamma. "Harry, how could you say such a dreadful thing? I have a great mind not to love you a bit!"

"Of course I didn't mean grandmamma," replied Harry, "and I didn't really mean any of them; I know it was very bad of me, but I feel better since I have told it."

Mrs. Wildford pressed her lips on the broad, open forehead of the boy, and hoped much from

the spirit of truthfulness that always characterized his actions.

"Doesn't it seem funny, grandmamma, that Uncle Harry should have met the boy who had Wag? I really believe that I was meant to have him, after all. And I'm so glad that you like to have him in here!"

Grandmamma was not at all sure that she did like it, but she was so accustomed to consider the pleasure of others before her own that neither Harry nor Minnie would ever have suspected it.

CHAPTER VII.

A VISIT TO A RAJAH.

"NOW," said Mrs. Wildford, "I will tell you, this afternoon, of our visit to the rajah of Allabag. He lived in the fort, a dismal-looking building almost entirely surrounded by the sea. There was a sort of bridge or pier at one side that could be crossed at high water, but it would not have been at all distinguished for us to walk there, and as his Highness sent a boat, a palanquin and a horse for our accommodation, we concluded to make the most of them."

"Why, how could you use them all, grandmamma?" asked Minnie.

"We managed it in this way: the boat took us from our bungalow to the fort—a very short sail; the palanquin was for me to be carried in from the boat, and the horse for your grandfather, who rode beside me into the fort. We had quite a train, consisting of two or three teachers from the different

schools, our four servants and the lascars who took us from Bombay, and when we passed through the guard of soldiers who were stationed in front of the fort, they fell back and presented arms."

"How did they do that, grandmamma?" said Minnie; "in this way?" extending her own arms as she spoke. "Now, Harry, you're real mean to laugh! That isn't as bad as the musty pony."

"I do not think it is bad at all," said her grandmamma, with an affectionate caress. "I remember that when I was a little girl like you, Minnie, I never could understand what it meant when I read of 'presenting arms.' This does not mean arms that are attached to the body, but the swords, guns or whatever weapons the soldiers carry, and they present them by holding them out as if ready to deliver them to the persons to be honored. This mark of respect is always bestowed upon royal personages, and it is considered a great distinction. We rather wondered that poor missionaries were treated with such consideration, and we knew that the example of the rajah would be generally followed by his subjects."

"Was there any garden there," asked Harry, "with animals and things?"

"There were 'things,' Harry, but not animals.

The rajah's garden was in the middle of the fort, with a fountain in the centre, and all around the fountain were pots of beautiful tropical plants. Beyond these were carefully-blinded windows, where I thought the women of the zenana were probably peeping out at us. I felt sad to think of these poor prisoners, and I would have been glad to see the building torn down that they might go forth into God's free air and sunlight. We had been taken to the court, but we were soon called into a small room, where the rajah sat on a raised seat of scarlet cloth that was approached by two steps. He was a fat, coarse-looking man, dressed principally in two shawls, one of which was wound about his waist, and the other hung over his left shoulder. His turban was of crimson silk; his slippers were scarlet, embroidered with gold, and turned up at the toes, just like this one."

Minnie thought that the large slipper looked more like a boat than anything else, and Harry considered it very unbecoming in a man to wear such finery.

"Why didn't he have a crown on his head full of diamonds?" said he. "I thought that kings always wore crowns."

"Not Eastern kings," replied his grandmother;

"they prefer turbans, and this king was not rich enough to have a crown of diamonds. He was quite a low-caste rajah, and did not wear the Brahminical string, so that his rank was inferior to that of his prime minister. His forehead was painted with the marks of his idols, and he had gold hoops in his ears with a diamond in each, but I do not think he wore any other jewels."

"Ear-rings!" shouted Harry, in contempt. "Oh my! why didn't he go and be a girl at once?"

"Poor man!" said Mrs. Wildford, smiling; "I think he dressed himself as well as he knew how. He received us very graciously; we made our salaam on entering, and though he did not leave his seat, he acknowledged it quite politely. We talked of very much the same things as when we visited the dewan, and the rajah was very attentive when we told him of our country and the long journey we had taken to get to his. He was not so intelligent a man as was his prime minister, but he seemed well disposed, and after we had talked a while he signified his willingness that I should visit the queen and his other wives, and I was very glad to have the opportunity. Your grandfather, of course, was not allowed to accompany me, but our servants went as far as the inner door, where

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they waited, and one of the rajah's officers showed us the way."

"Did it look like the imaum of Muscat's place?" asked Harry.

"Not at all," was the reply; "the rooms were rather dark and gloomy-looking, for the ceilings were low and the windows small, but they were divided by handsome silk hangings instead of doors, and the walls were covered with mirrors. The queen was very much in the style of the king and not at all handsome, but she was richly dressed, with heavy ear-rings and a nose-ring of jewels, and chains of pearls and other precious stones hanging down on her bosom. There were five or six very pretty women with the queen, and these were also the rajah's wives, but of lower rank. Two or three very handsome children belonging to some of these women were in the room, and the little things were so laden with jewelry and golden embroidery that they looked very uncomfortable. It is a custom of the Hindoos and Parsees to dress their children very expensively, and little girls have sometimes been robbed in the streets of their rich clothing."

"What kind of slippers did the queen wear, grandmamma?" asked Minnie.

"Flesh-colored ones, Minnie, which means that she wore none at all, neither she nor the other ladies. Their feet were quite bare, with the exception of toe-rings and anklets. These anklets were of gold and silver, and had little bells on them."

"'With rings on her fingers
And bells on her toes,
She makes music
Wherever she goes,'"

said Harry.

"But the bells were not on their toes," said Minnie, stoutly; "they were on their ankles. How horrid those rings on their toes must have felt, grandmamma! Ugh! it makes me crawl to think of it."

"Yes," continued Harry, laughing; "you should hear Sarah, grandmamma, when she is trying to get Minnie bathed and dressed. She comes to mamma's dressing-room about five times with the complaint, 'Please, ma'am, Miss Minnie won't let me touch her toes.'"

"I don't care!" replied Minnie; "I do hate to have my toes touched, and Sarah tickles me so. But, grandmamma, please tell us more about those funny women. Were they glad to see you?"

"They appeared to be, and the queen smiled at

me a great deal, and then laughed outright. I found that they were all amused at my bonnet—a thing they had never seen before. Bonnets were worn very large then, and mine was of straw. So I told them just how it was made, and bleached in the sun, and then they asked me if I had been bleached like my bonnet. They could not understand how I came to be so white."

"Bleached, indeed!" exclaimed Minnie. "I wish the sun did bleach people instead of making them black; then I would not have to put on a clumsy great hat every time I run out of the house in summer."

"Don't you wish you were a boy?" asked Harry, teasingly. "Mamma lets me get as black I choose; she says she likes to see a boy with a coat of tan. How tired I should get of trying to look pretty all the time, as girls have to!"

"Now," said Mrs. Wildford, who was afraid that this might be carried too far, "suppose we go back to the queen and the other women of the zenana. When I had satisfied them about the bonnet, they examined my dress from head to foot, and thought it very funny that it fitted me so tightly. They asked me how I was able to breathe, although it was really loose for our fashions. I asked them if

they would like to learn to read, but all the reply I could get was that they were women. They were quite as much surprised as the women in the street had been to hear me speak their language, and the queen told me that mine must be a strange country. Presently a servant entered bearing a large tray of sweetmeats, which was laid at my feet; this is considered a respectful way of presenting a gift in the East."

"Was it all for you, grandmamma?"

"Yes," was the reply; "and I think you would have enjoyed some of it very much, Minnie. There were preserved cocoanut, and mangoes, and guavas, and something green that looked like citron cut into queer shapes and quite dry. I tasted one of these little cakes, which was all that was expected of me, and then the tray was handed to my servants outside to be carried home for me. Not the tray itself, for that was of solid silver, and the queen had no idea of parting with it."

"She wasn't a very generous queen," said Harry.

"Perhaps not," replied his grandmamma, "but I did not at all desire the silver tray. Another offering was soon laid at my feet that was not quite so acceptable as the preserves, but this, too, I was

obliged to taste to avoid giving offence. It is called pawn, and is made of little square pieces of betel nut mixed with cardamom seeds and other spices wrapped in an aromatic leaf. This mess is constantly chewed by the natives, and is said to be not at all bad when one gets used to it, but this I had no idea of doing. Having selected a cardamom seed, with which I felt more at home than I did with the other articles, I put it into my mouth and the queen was quite satisfied. Her Majesty did me the honor of sprinkling me with rose-water, after the manner of the dewan, and also of putting attar on my hands and handkerchief. She did this so thoroughly that I was scented up for a month to come."

"How very funny!" said Minnie, laughing. "What would mamma's visitors think if she should throw cologne-water on them when they came to see her?"

"It would look as though she didn't think them very clean," observed Harry.

"The East, Harry, is very different from the West," continued his grandmother, "and many customs will not bear transplanting. The servant then brought in some jessamine flowers threaded on strings, just as children string lilac blossoms; a

necklace of these was placed on my neck and a bracelet on each arm."

"That was very pretty," said Minnie; "I would have liked that better than the perfuming."

"The jessamine itself has a very strong perfume," said Mrs. Wildford, "and I did not care to have the flowers quite so near me, but it would have given great offence to take them off. It was now time to take my leave, and I ventured to present the queen with a copy of the gospel in Mahratta and a couple of tracts in the same language. She smiled good-naturedly, and said they were no good; she could not read. 'Cannot some one read them to you?' I asked. She laughed at my perseverance, and said yes, her gooroo could.'"

"What's that?" asked Harry; "it sounds like a monkey."

"A gooroo is a teacher and a priest who lives in a family—a sort of private chaplain. I hoped that the gooroo not only could read the books to the queen, but would, though I had my doubts of this, and I left the place with no very hopeful feelings. I believe that the queen looked upon me as a sort of crazy woman."

"Where was grandpapa all this time?" said Harry.

"I left him with the rajah," was the reply, "and when I returned, they were evidently waiting for me. They seemed to have exhausted all they had to say to each other, and I think they were both glad to be released. Then came a second perfuming from the rajah."

"What! more rose-water?" exclaimed both the children.

"Yes," said Mrs. Wildford, "and attar too. I thought the rajah really enjoyed the business, perhaps because he was to get rid of us so soon. A double quantity of jessamine jewelry was now brought in, and your grandfather was ornamented as well as myself."

"How funny he must have looked!" said Harry. "Why didn't he snatch them off, grandmamma?"

"He looked as though he felt oddly," was the reply, "but he was ready to bear a greater cross than a necklace and bracelets of flowers for the chance of furthering his Master's work. We now made our salaams and retired, thankful that we had apparently gained the good-will of those in authority to help us in our work at Allabag."

Harry rose with great gravity, and executed a very good salaam himself as he led Minnie off to the nursery for a romp before dinner.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE KUBEER-PUNT.

"GRANDMAMMA," said Minnie, "did you ever see those poor women again who stood and listened to you that morning?"

"Yes, indeed, my child," was the reply; "they fell quite into the way of stopping at the verandah as they passed to their work, and many a good 'preach' did I have while they listened eagerly to the 'old, old story of Jesus and his love.' I gave them books, which they received gratefully, although they could not read, but some one might get them who could read, and I have reason to believe that the seed sown in this way sprang up and bore fruit abundantly. I think I must tell you of one of your dear grandfather's journeys while we were at Allabag, when I was not with him, and his visit to a queer little village. Would you like to hear it?"

"Yes, indeed," replied the children; "but why were you not with him, grandmamma?"

"I could not always go," said Mrs. Wildford; "sometimes the journey would be too fatiguing for me, and sometimes I would have a bad headache. This was the trouble on that occasion, and I was lying in the bungalow with a wet cloth on my head, while the Padre Sahib, as they called your grandfather (which means Mr. Priest), was riding from village to village distributing books and preaching the glad tidings of salvation. Toward sunset he was walking his horse slowly along and thinking of all the work he had done during the day, when he spied a little village that was rather out of his road, and as he wished to go to an important place not far off, he could not quite make up his mind that it was best to turn out of his way and visit this little hamlet. But he could not seem to get on, and the horse, almost of his own accord, took that direction. It was quite a humble village, and a very still one; not a living soul could be found to give an account of the inhabitants."

"I guess they were all asleep," said Harry, thinking of fairy tales he had read which sounded like this.

"You will see," continued his grandmamma. "At length, on the outskirts of the village, your grandfather met a man who was watching some

cows, and from him he learned that the people (this never means women, in India) had all gone to the house of the patel, or chief man of the place. Your grandfather said that he wished them to be told that he had come a long way to see them, and that he had something to tell them, when the man offered to show him the way to the patel's, that he might go and speak to them there."

"But, grandmamma," asked Minnie, quite anxiously, "what did they do with the women?"

"They kept them shut up in the houses, my child, and they would not have dared to speak to the missionary if they had seen him. Only the lower orders of women are allowed to walk in the streets of India. The women of the upper classes are not even permitted to appear in the houses before many of their own male relatives without the chuddar, or veil, drawn tightly over their faces."

"Ugh!" said Minnie, who hated veils, even to keep off the sun. "I am glad I'm not a Hindoo woman!"

"You may be glad, indeed," was the reply, "and I hope you will not only be glad, but thankful to your heavenly Father who has made you a Christian child instead of placing you among the heathen. But to return to your grandfather and

his guide: as they were walking to the patel's house they came to the temple, and all the men, about a hundred in number, were just coming out from there. The patel was easily distinguished by his air of importance and the respect paid him by the others, and as the stranger approached him he made his salaam very politely, and asked what he could do for him.

"Your grandfather replied that he did not want anything except to have a little talk with him, that he had come a long way for this purpose, and he thought it could be done best in the open air, for the patel had invited him to his house, but the missionary did not wish to lose the crowd of people, who could see and hear him better where there was more room.

"The man looked quite pleased to hear that so much trouble had been taken on his account, and your grandfather began his work by asking, pointing at the same time to the images, 'What is this? And this? And this?' For there were idols outside of the temple as well as in.

"'Those are gods,' the patel replied, and he seemed quite proud of saying it.

"'And what are they made of?' was the next question.

"'Of stone;' and the patel wondered that the strange white man could not see this for himself.

"'And who made them?'

"'Oh, a famous workman who carves splendidly in stone, and who has made very many such things.'

"'And you worship them, do you not?'

"'Of course they did; they paid puja to them whenever they wished to be preserved from harm, or wanted rain, or wanted it to stop raining, or wished for success in business, or to be taken care of on a journey, and many other things.'"

"But what is 'puja,' grandmamma?" asked Harry. "I never heard of such queer people as these Hindoos!"

"That is their name for worship," said Mrs. Wildford. "Puja is performed by sprinkling an idol with holy water from the Ganges, and placing before it offerings of sweetmeats, rice, flowers and whatever else the person chooses to offer. Certain words are repeated as each article is presented, and if any mistake is made, it has to be all done over again. It is quite a work of time to teach the children to pay puja properly; it is very different from the simple prayers that our Saviour loves to hear from infant lips."

"What did grandpapa say next?" asked Harry.

"I think he then asked the patel if he were not the chief man of the place. He said that he was; and he evidently felt very proud of being the head man.

"'And all the other men treat you with a great deal of respect, do they not, and ask your advice about a great many things?'

"'Yes,' he said; 'they did.'

"Your grandfather told him that this was very proper, as he was the most important person in the village. 'But suppose,' he continued, 'that the people should begin to say, We have been paying too much attention to the patel, and we are not going to notice him any more; here is a piece of stone: we will take that for our chief man, and pay our respects to it instead of the patel. How would you like that?'

"The man gazed at the missionary in great surprise, and said that he should not like it at all. Now, Harry, can you not tell me what your grandfather then told him?"

"Yes," replied Harry; "I think he talked to him about worshiping God instead of idols, didn't he, grandmamma?"

"That was just it; he spoke to him of the great

and mighty God who made him and all mankind; who watched over him all the days of his life; who gave or withheld the rain, and who alone had power over all things; who crowned him, as the Psalmist says, with loving-kindness and tender mercies, and who has said, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.' And yet he looked down upon ungrateful men who paid him no respect, but hired men as weak as themselves to make them idols of wood and stone, which they worshiped instead of the great and good God to whom they owed everything they had. What would God think of such men? Would he be pleased when they treated stones as if they were himself? And would he not punish them?

"The patel looked very much troubled; no one had ever spoken to him of the truth before, and now he could make no reply to it.

"'Sahib,' said he, after thinking very gravely, 'what you say is very good, and perhaps your holy books are better than our Shasters. I am not a learned man, and therefore I cannot answer you, but there is a man in the place who could answer you if he were only here. He is a kubeer-punt, but he is a very good man, and he teaches the people what is right.'"

"Now, grandmamma," said Minnie, "please tell us what that something-punt is."

"The kubeer-punts," said Mrs. Wildford, smiling, "are men who teach a sort of patched-up religion which is partly Hindoo, and partly Mohammedan, and partly Buddhist—in short, a little of everything. They do not worship idols, and they are generally very moral, well-behaved people. The patel spoke of this kubeer-punt with great respect, and your grandfather requested that he might be sent for, as he should like to hear what he had to say.

"'But he cannot come,' was the reply; 'he is sick.'

"A missionary soon learns the necessity of perseverance, and the Padre Sahib next inquired if he could not go to the man's house.

"Yes; the patel thought that would do very nicely, and the crowd, who had listened to everything in respectful silence, moved in procession after their head man and the strange visitor. When they reached the house, they called to the kubeer-punt to come out and show himself, as a brother gooroo had traveled a long distance to talk with him. The sick man, who was quite fine-looking, with an intelligent, dignified countenance, appeared in the doorway, and seemed bewildered by the crowd

around him. He looked sick, but he had evidently not been in bed, and when he saw the stranger, he made his salaam and represented himself to be at his service.

"'Are you able to come outside?' asked your grandfather; 'I should like to have a little talk with you. I have heard that you are a good and learned man.'

"Very well pleased at this, the kubeer-punt produced a mat for his visitor and one for himself, and down they sat by the door, while the crowd stood waiting for the words of wisdom that they expected to hear from two such learned gooroos.

"'I believe,' said your grandfather, 'that you teach the people here what is their duty, and that you teach them very good things?'

"'I try to tell them what is right,' replied the man, humbly.

"'May I ask you to tell me some of the things you teach?' continued the visitor.

"'I tell them,' said the kubeer-punt, 'that they must not lie, or steal, or kill; that they must not cheat in their business, or harm each other in any other way.'

"'That is very good indeed,' replied your grandfather, 'and I hope they attend to what you say.'

"'That they do,' said the patel, warmly; 'this good man has improved us very much.'

"'But why are they to keep from doing these things?' asked the missionary; 'what do you promise them as a reward for all this carefulness?'

"'The favor of God,' was the reply, 'and that they shall be happy when they die.'

"'But suppose that they should sometimes break these very good rules and be guilty of the very sins they committed before you taught them; what then? I dare say, now,' turning to the crowd, 'that some of you do lie and steal occasionally, in spite of the good teachings you have?'

"'Oh yes,' they said, very smilingly, and without the least shame. A Hindoo never thinks such sins disgraceful.

"'Why, then,' replied the kubeer-punt, 'if they pronounce a certain word that I give them, their sins will all be burned to ashes.'

"'What is that word?' asked your grandfather.

"'I cannot tell you; it can only be pronounced to those who need it for their sins. It is very sacred.'

"'I do not need it,' continued the missionary, 'for I have something better, but if I say the word to you, will you tell me if I am right?'

"The kubeer-punt said that he would.

"'Well, then, your word (which you have taken from the Sanscrit) is Sohum.'

"The man started, and stared at your grandfather as though he had been a magician. 'How did you know?' he asked.

"'It is the name of the Almighty God,' was the reply, 'for it means *I Am*, and you are partly right in saying that this Name will cleanse the people from their sins, but you have not the whole truth. What do you do about those sins that were committed before these people tried to lead better lives?'

"'God was merciful,' the kubeer-punt said; 'he would forgive these sins.'

"'Suppose, then, that a man who had murdered some one was taken before government by the friends of the murdered man, and after government had heard the story it should say, Oh, well, that is bad, to be sure, but he won't do so again. He's a poor fellow, and we know he's sorry; we'll let him go this time. Suppose that the man even lived for ten years without doing any more harm, would it be just for government to let him go without punishment?'

"The kubeer-punt looked very thoughtful, but

said, 'No; people would not be satisfied unless government punished those who did wrong.'

"'If a man stole a large sum of money,' continued your grandfather, 'and spent it all, what should government do then?'

"'Make him pay his own money to the man from whom he stole.'

"'But what if he were poor and had no money of his own? What would be done then?'

"'He must go to prison,' was the prompt reply."

"I know!" exclaimed Minnie, with great interest. "It is in the Bible, grandmamma—'Put in prison till he should pay the whole debt.'"

"Yes, my dear little girl, it is, and we are coming to Him who paid the debt for us all. Your grandfather then said to the kubeer-punt,

"'But, perhaps, when the man is about to be taken to prison, some kind friend steps forward and says, 'I have the money; take it, and let this man go free.' It would then be right to let the man go, would it not?'

"'Yes,' replied the kubeer-punt, wondering where this was leading him; 'it would be right.'

"'Now, my friend,' said the missionary, 'this is just where my belief is better than yours: your

man must go to prison when he has nothing to pay; your plan is good, as far as it goes, but there is no salvation in it. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.'

"He preached to him Jesus, the Way, the Truth and the Life, and the man who had taught others now sat humbly at his feet to learn. Your grandfather then gave the kubeer-punt the Gospel of St. John, and made him promise that he would read it carefully and think deeply on all that he found in it. 'Then,' said he, 'come to me and tell me just how you feel about it.' He mounted his horse again, and the crowd followed him quite a distance with great respect and admiration, for he had spoken such words of wisdom that even the kubeer-punt was not able to answer him."

"Did grandpapa ever see the man again?" asked Harry.

"He did, indeed," was the reply; "in about two weeks the kubeer-punt went to Bombay to find the Padre Sahib and tell him that he could be a kubeer-punt no longer."

"Was not grandpapa glad then that he went to the little village?" asked Minnie.

"Both glad and thankful," replied Mrs. Wildford. "It was plainly the working of God's providence that he turned aside, somewhat against his will, to the lonely hamlet. He took the kubeer-punt with him on his next short journey, and oh how earnestly the man talked to all whom he met of the one subject that seemed to fill his mind!—the *atonement of Christ.*

"Sometimes those whom he had once taught differently would say to him, 'Then you have been deceiving us all along, have you, teaching us false doctrine?'

"'I taught what I believed then,' he replied. 'I was deceived myself.'

"'But how do we know that you are not deceived now?' would be the next question.

"'Try and see,' he would exclaim, while his face became perfectly radiant. 'I never knew what peace and joy were before. Christ is just the Saviour that we need; he does not half save us and leave us to work out the rest, but he saves us wholly now and for ever.'

"He became a most successful preacher to his heathen countrymen, and many souls were gathered into the heavenly garner through the instrumentality of that one missionary visit.

"'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou canst not tell whether shall prosper that or this.'"

"I wish I could sow some seed," said Minnie, thoughtfully.

"My little one is sowing ten cents a week," replied her grandmamma, with a smile. "How does she get along with that?"

Minnie's fair skin became quite red as she said with an effort, "Grandmamma, Harry was so good in telling you about 'Wag' that I must tell you about my ten cents. I used to spend it very often in molasses candy, and almost every Saturday now Sarah buys me some candy herself."

"Then Sarah is not really 'mean,' is she?" asked Mrs. Wildford, quietly.

"Oh, grandmamma," exclaimed the little girl, with a burning blush, "she is not mean at all, and I am afraid that I have been very bad to her. I promised Sarah that I would ask you something for her: may she come in sometimes and hear about India?"

"Certainly she may," was the reply—"just as often as she can find time. Tell Sarah that I shall always be glad to see her. But I think," continued Mrs. Wildford, "that I have found a better

way of giving for my little missionaries, and that is to earn the money beforehand."

"Oh, grandmamma," shouted Harry, in great delight, "that will be capital. What do you want me to do for you?"

"I can't afford to keep a boy to wait upon me," said his grandmamma, laughing, "and I did not say that you were to earn the money from me. But there are ways in which boys can earn money. I heard of a boy once who had what he called a missionary hen, and all the eggs this hen laid he put aside to sell for the heathen."

"I like that," said Harry, enthusiastically; "let us each have a missionary hen, Minnie, if mamma gives us leave."

"I don't believe mine would lay any eggs," replied his sister, disconsolately.

Harry caught sight of his father as he was bounding down stairs.

"Oh, papa," he exclaimed, impetuously, "can't I have a missionary hen?"

Mr. Bolton had what Harry called his funny look on.

"I have not the least idea," said he, "where such a fowl could be procured; indeed, I am quite sure that I never even heard of one before."

"Well, grandmamma can tell you all about it," replied Harry, who began to be afraid that his father was laughing at him.

As Mrs. Wildford just then appeared, her son-in-law asked her quite gravely to what particular branch of missionary work these remarkable hens directed their attention.

"They merely pursue their ordinary employment of laying eggs," was the reply; "the missionary part depends on their owners."

When Uncle Harry came in, as he frequently did of an evening, the joke was repeated, and poor Harry junior became quite tired of hearing about missionary hens. Mamma soon decided that even a hen of this stamp would not respect her flower-garden, and the poultry plan had to be given up for the present.

CHAPTER IX.

HINDOO BOYS AND TODDY-WALLAHS.

SARAH presented herself, sewing in hand, with a smile and a blush, at Mrs. Wildford's door the next afternoon, and was evidently very much pleased with her reception. Perhaps there was rather a superabundance of ribbons, but she had a bright, pleasant face, and was devoted to the children.

Wag's black nose next appeared, and grandmamma laughed at the variety of her visitors as she told Harry that she should hold him responsible for his dog's behavior. "Wag" was ordered to curl himself into a ball at once, which he did very obediently, and then Harry asked:

"When grandpapa went about to preach to the heathen in those villages, didn't he ever meet any boys like me?"

"Not exactly like you," was the reply, "for they were several shades darker, and they did not have much on them in the way of clothes. Sometimes they wore caps like this."

Mrs. Wildford took down a stiff velvet cap from the hook where it was hanging, and showed the children how it was ornamented with gold embroidery.

"What makes it so hard?" asked Minnie. "I thought that velvet was always soft."

"It is made on a frame," was the reply; "there is probably thick pasteboard underneath."

"And do they wear those warm things out in the hot sun, ma'am?" asked Sarah.

"Yes; they do not mind the sun as we do, for they have always been used to it. Here is a lighter cap of scarlet cloth."

"It looks like a fool's cap!" said Harry, contemptuously; "I wouldn't wear it."

"Neither would a Hindoo boy," replied his grandmamma, "for this is intended for a girl. It is a bride's cap, and is only worn during the marriage ceremony."

Sarah did not think this nearly so pretty for a bride as a white veil and orange blossoms, but "she supposed these ignorant heathen didn't know how to do things properly."

Mrs. Wildford sighed as she said that this was a very small part of their ignorance.

"I must tell you, Harry," she continued, "of a

little fellow whom your grandfather met while we were at Allabag. He was sitting on a rock by himself whistling."

"Do Hindoo boys whistle?" asked Minnie, in surprise.

"Yes," replied her grandmother; "they are very much like other boys. But what did you expect them to do, my dear?"

"I thought," said Minnie, hesitatingly, "that they made dreadful noises like Indians."

"Oh!" said Harry, laughing; "she expected them to be giving Indian war-whoops, I suppose."

"They do make dreadful noises very often," continued Mrs. Wildford, "but this little fellow was very harmlessly whistling and watching some sheep that were browsing near. Your grandfather had passed a great many people on the road, and when he came up to the boy, he asked him where all the people were going. The boy stopped whistling and gazed at him in great surprise.

"'Why, don't you know?' said he. 'They're going on a pilgrimage.'

"'And what is that?' was the next question.

"'Why, don't you know what a pilgrimage is? They are going to a very holy place where there is a large god made of gold, and when they come

back they will be very holy themselves, and may do what they please.'

"'Has this god so much power, then?' continued your grandfather.

"'Oh yes,' said the boy; 'he is a very rich god; he is worth forty thousand rupees; he is made of gold, you know.'

"'But I should think some one would steal him,' said the missionary. 'Do not people try to carry him away?'

"'It would take more than two men to do that,' was the reply, 'and besides, the Brahmins stay with him and watch him all the time. But why do you not go and see him yourself, sahib? I have told you the truth about him."

"'I do not worship any of your gods, my boy,' said your grandfather, kindly; 'I come from a far country where the people all worship one God.'

"'What is he made of?'

"'I cannot tell you what he is made of, for he is a spirit, but he is a great deal richer than this gold god you have told me of.'

"'Is he?' said the boy, eagerly; 'is he worth eighty thousand rupees, then?'

"'He is worth more than the whole world,' was the reply, 'for he made everything in it—this

ground, and these trees that you see growing, and you, and me, and all men. My God is very wise, too; there is nothing that he does not know. He knows your name, though I don't know it, and he knows that I am talking to you now. He sees us all the time.'

"The boy looked frightened, and glanced about him. 'He is not here now,' said he; 'I do not see him at all. My name is Ramoo. Is your god wiser than Gunputti?'

"This is the god of wisdom, of whom I told you, with the elephant's head. Shall I tell you how this god came to be a boy with an elephant's head? It is a very silly Hindoo story."

The children were anxious to hear the silly story, and Sarah looked very much interested.

"The Brahmins say," continued Mrs. Wildford, "that Vishnu one day went on a journey, and Saraswati, his wife, thought this would be a good time to take a bath. So she made a boy out of clay and gave him life, and told him to stand in the doorway as sentinel, and to let no one come into the house, no matter who it might be. Now, it happened that the first person who wished to come in was Vishnu himself, who had either forgotten something or had changed his mind about taking

the journey. He was very angry at the obstinate boy who blocked up the doorway, and would not let him into his own house, and drawing his sword, he cut off his head at one blow.

"When Saraswati heard the noise, she came running to see what was the matter, and there she found her boy, for whom she had begun to feel quite an attachment, without a head, her husband in a rage and the place generally disordered. But Saraswati made such loud lamentations and tore her hair so dreadfully, flinging herself on the ground and trying to beat her brains out (the Hindoo style of mourning), that Vishnu was obliged to compose himself and try to pacify his wife.

"He told her that, since she thought so much of the boy, he could put his head on again, and he would be just as good as ever, but when he looked around for the head, it could nowhere be found. The body was there, but no head, and as Saraswati threatened to kill herself on the spot if the boy were not brought to life again, Vishnu ordered his servants to go out and bring him the first head they could find.

"Presently they returned with an elephant's head, and Vishnu put this on the boy, who came to life

immediately. Saraswati thought even an elephant's head better than none, but she could not help acknowledging to herself that the boy did look rather oddly, so, to comfort him for his want of beauty, she made him very wise, and ordered the people everywhere to worship him as the god of wisdom.

"And now," said Mrs. Wildford, "you have the history of a famous Hindoo god who is worshiped throughout India under different names, and, silly as the story is, it is preferable to many stories of their gods, which are not only silly, but vile and disgusting."*

"And only to think, ma'am," said Sarah, "of their worshiping such things!"

"Aren't you glad, grandmamma," asked Minnie, "that you, and I, and all of us, live in a Christian country where people don't worship idols?"

Grandmamma looked quite grave as she replied: "There are different kinds of idol-worship, Minnie; the poor untaught heathen bows down to an image that some man has made of wood or stone, and calls it god, while the Christian often makes an idol of some living object or of his vanity, his love of gain, his pride. Whatever occupies his thoughts

* There are other stories told to account for the elephant head of Gunputti, or Ganesha, quite different from this.

or his affections more than God is his idol. The prophet says, 'Set not up your idols in your hearts,' but I am afraid that a great many of us are not quite free from this kind of idolatry."

Harry thoughtfully stroked the dog's ears as he wondered if "Wag" was an idol, while Sarah blushed deeply as her eye fell upon the bright ribbons and nicely-fitting dress that took so much of her time and thoughts, and Minnie concluded to ask grandmamma, when they were quite alone, if having her hair crimped was making an idol of it.

"What became of the boy, grandmamma?" asked Harry.

"I wish that I could tell you," replied Mrs. Wildford, "but I really do not know. He sat there on the rock that afternoon, kicking his bare feet like any other boy, and looking very shrewd and smiling as he glanced up at your grandfather, but he found it difficult to understand about this strange God who was so much wiser than Gnuputti.

"'I wish you'd show him to me,' said the little Hindoo, wistfully; 'don't you carry him about with you?'

"'Yes, I do,' replied the missionary, 'and so do you. He often talks to you when you do not know it.'

"A pair of great black eyes were staring at him in wonderment, and your grandfather continued: 'When you do anything wrong, even when no one knows it, does not something inside tell you that it is wrong?'

"'Yes,' was the reply.

"'Well, that is the voice of this great and powerful God, who is also very kind and loving, and cares tenderly for the little ones like you. He has sent you, Ramoo, a message by me; shall I tell you what it is?'

"'Oh yes!' said the boy, with great animation.

"'Well, then, he says to you, My son, give me thy heart, and he will not be satisfied with you until you obey him.'

"'But he cannot have my heart without killing me,' replied the poor little heathen, 'and oh, Padre Sahib, I do not want to die!'

"I think the poor child almost expected to see your grandfather take out a sharp knife to make an offering of him on the spot, but when his fears were quieted, he listened eagerly to the missionary's story of the loving Saviour who, instead of wishing him to die, had died himself that he might live for ever.

"This boy could read, and your grandfather gave

him some little books, and told him that they would show him how to find the God of whom he had spoken; it was then time for the missionary to continue his journey, but the boy's eyes followed him until he was quite out of sight.

"I loved to hear his accounts of those days when he had to travel alone, and I watched from the bungalow for his coming, half afraid, often, that something had happened, but God always closed the lion's mouth, and the missionary was wonderfully preserved."

"I did not know that there were lions in India, grandmamma," said Minnie, innocently.

"Not real lions, my dear child," was the reply, "but this term is often used to express any kind of danger. King David says in one of the psalms, 'My soul is among lions,' which means that he was surrounded by many spiritual dangers."

"I like to hear about the Hindoo boys," said Harry; "did grandpapa meet any more of them?"

"Yes," replied his grandmother; "he frequently met them in various ways, but I cannot remember just what he said to them all. He told me, one day, of his meeting a little goorune and holding a conversation with him."

"But didn't you say, grandmamma, that a goo-

rune was a priest who lived in a family and taught them about religious things?"

"No, Harry; I said that a gooroo was a teacher, or private chaplain, but a goorune is a boy who sweeps out the temple and works there under the orders of the Brahmins. This little goorune had just finished his work for the day when your grandfather came upon him, and as the boy smiled pleasantly and had a very sweet face, the missionary stopped and asked him where he lived.

"'At home,' he said, 'with mother.'

"'And have you a nice, pleasant home,' asked your grandfather, 'and is your mother kind to you?'

"The boy's whole face brightened as he replied that their hut was nicely thatched, so that the rain did not come in, and they had a cocoanut tree close by.

"A cocoanut tree is almost wealth to people living in those Eastern countries, for they eat the fruit and drink the milk of the nut, and make the hard shell into cups and plates, while the leaves and bark cover their houses, and are made into clothing, and mats, and many useful things.

"When the little goorune spoke of his mother, the missionary saw that he was very fond of her.

"'Yes,' he said, 'she was a very good mother, and although she only got a few piee a day for working for some of the sahibs, she always had rice cooked for him when he went home, and he believed that she would go without herself to give it to him.'

"'I hope,' continued the missionary, 'that you are very obedient to this kind mother, and try to do everything that she tells you?'

"'Yes,' the boy said; 'he did try, for he loved his mother, and she was all he had.'

"'Is your father dead, then?' asked the missionary.

"'Yes; he had no father,' he said.

"'But you really have one,' continued your grandfather, 'though you do not know it.'

"The boy shook his head.

"'I saw my father die,' said he, 'and then I saw him burned. My mother was going to be burned, too, but the government peons came and took her off the pile. The Brahmins held me up to light it, and I was very proud of this, for I was only a little fellow then.'"

"Oh, ma'am," exclaimed Sarah in horror, "is this really true? Do they do such dreadful things as burning people like that?"

"They burn their dead," replied Mrs. Wildford, "and before I went to India, and for some time afterward, it was not uncommon for a widow to be burned alive with the dead body of her husband: this was called a suttee; but the English government has succeeded in putting a stop to this crime. It sometimes take place now, but only in a very secret manner, so that it is not known before it is all over."

"But what did he mean by lighting the fire to burn up his father?" asked Minnie. "What a wicked little creature he must have been!"

"That is judging too hastily," replied her grandmother; "the poor little fellow had been taught that this was his duty and a mark of respect to his dead father. It is the Hindoo custom for the oldest son to set fire to the burial pile, and it is doubly sad to see a child of tender years held up to perform a task at which every natural feeling should revolt."

"Did not grandpapa then begin to tell the boy of his heavenly Father?" asked Harry.

"Yes," was the reply; "he told him of this loving Father who watched over him all the time, and who loved him far more than his earthly father could have done.

"'But why, then, does he not let me see him?' asked the child, who seemed to be of a very affectionate disposition.

"'You cannot see him now,' replied the missionary, 'because he wishes you to obey him without seeing him, but he has a beautiful home all ready for you, and if you are an obedient child, he will take you there to live with him, and then you will see him always. But God does not like to have you worship these idols,' continued your grandfather, pointing to the hideous images outside of the temple; 'it will not do you any good to pray to pieces of wood and stone, and your heavenly Father says that you must pray only to him.'

"'But the Brahmins tell me that I must pay puja to Rama, and Kali, and Gunputti, and all the rest of them,' replied the boy; 'what, then, am I to do?'

"'Suppose,' asked the missionary, 'that they also told you to leave your dear mother, or to treat her very badly, and to pile up some stones and call that your mother; would you do it?'

"The boy's eyes were full of tears as he said warmly, 'I would not do it. But, Padre Sahib,' he added, 'they say that the Brahmins cannot teach us what is wrong, they are so good and learned.'

"'Here is something that will teach you better, my poor child,' said the missionary, giving him a copy of St. Luke's gospel; 'take this home to your mother, and if she cannot read, read it to her.'

"As your grandfather went on his way he heard a great noise and commotion, and looking back, he saw that half a dozen noisy Hindoo boys had sprung out from behind the temple on the little goorune, and were tormenting him with hideous yells for listening to the padre when he talked of the Christians' God. They tried to seize his little book, but he held it fast, and running as swiftly as his legs would carry him, he soon got beyond his tormentors, and disappeared in a cocoanut grove. Your grandfather wondered what mission that Mahratta translation of St. Luke's gospel would accomplish; he had cast it upon the waters, and perhaps it would return to him after many days. The little goorune reminded him of Samuel, and he prayed earnestly that he might be brought to serve the one true God to whom Samuel was given by his pious mother before he was born.

"And now," said Mrs. Wildford, "I will tell you about the toddy-wallahs, and then I think we must leave Allabag and the Concan, and travel back to Bombay."

"What are toddy-wallahs?" asked Minnie, looking very much bewildered; "are they animals?"

"They look very much like monkeys," replied her grandmother, laughing at the recollection, "but they are really men, and I will tell you what they do. Can you tell me what toddy is?"

"I know," said Harry; "it's something that makes people drunk."

"In this country it is made of rum, hot water and sugar," continued Mrs. Wildford, "and it does, as you say, make people drunk. But what would you think if I should tell you that toddy grows in India already made?"

"I should believe it, of course, if you said it, grandmamma," replied Harry, quite gravely, "but I should think it a very queer story."

"Well, I do not like to tell queer stories, Harry, but this one is really true. There is a kind of palm tree in India called the toddy palm, the sap of which really makes an intoxicating drink, but not until it has been distilled. When this sap is quite fresh, it is very cooling and delightful, and I have often been glad of a draught of it after a long walk or ride in the hot sun. The men who gather the sap are called toddy-wallahs, and very curious-looking objects they are. They wear no

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clothing but the cummer-bund, or waist-cloth, to which a large gourd is tied, and hangs down behind; they carry a sort of hooked knife to cut the bark, and, thus equipped, they climb the trees like monkeys, and keep up a very funny kind of singing all the time they are at work."

"What do they do with the gourds?" asked Minnie.

"Why, you goosie," cried Harry, "they were to put the sap in."

"Yes," said Mrs. Wildford, "these gourds were their pitchers. Your dear grandfather often preached to the toddy-wallahs, but when some of them thought of becoming Christians, they were very much troubled about keeping Sunday, for the general belief is that if these trees are left for a day after the tapping has begun, the toddy will be spoiled. Some of them concluded to try it, though, and they were delighted to find that they got on quite as well as the others. What is my little Minnie thinking so deeply about?"

"Why, I was thinking," she replied, timidly, "that grandpapa must have had to scream very loud to preach to those toddy men up in the trees."

"He did not try it, my dear," replied her grandmother, smiling, "until they were a little nearer

his own level. They did not remain altogether in the trees, as they were frequently on the ground to empty their gourds into larger vessels, and sometimes they were squatted in groups eating their dinners. Your grandpapa had too much work for his voice to send it any unnecessary distance. And now that I have told you about the toddy-wallahs, I wonder if any one can tell me where to look for a good seamstress?"

Sarah glanced up in surprise, and Minnie nestled close to her grandmamma to hear what else was to be added to this curious question.

"I have two handkerchiefs that need hemming," continued Mrs. Wildford, "and the money is to go to the missionaries."

"I wish I could sew," said Harry, regretfully; "I can't have a missionary hen, nor anything."

"Do not be discouraged," replied his grandmamma; "if you really have the wish to be useful, the way will be opened after a while. Now, Minnie, what about the handkerchiefs?"

"Why, grandmamma," said the little girl, regretting her impatience when Sarah had tried to teach her to use her needle properly, "I don't sew very nicely, you know, but I should like to try, if I may."

"Do your best, my child," said Mrs. Wildford, with a kiss, "and if the handkerchiefs are done entirely by yourself, I will pay you ten cents apiece for them when they are finished."

Mrs. Bolton pronounced this an exorbitant price, and declared that grandmamma would certainly be ruined, but as Minnie's slow, unpracticed fingers plodded over the task, now picking out what she had done, and now sighing over the soiled appearance of her work, it seemed to her that a dollar a handkerchief would scarcely pay for the labor and worry.

But the little girl was gaining more than the missionary money, and grandmamma had thought of this when she proposed the task; she was gaining habits of industry and perseverance, and the sweet consciousness of being of some use in the world.

CHAPTER X.

THE RAINY SEASON.

"HERE it's been pouring for two days," said Harry, discontentedly, "and I can't use my velocipede, nor have any fun in the park with Wag, and it's awful stupid for a boy to be poking round in the house all the time."

"Well, Harry," said his grandmamma, "I have seen sixty Aprils, and I never yet saw an April without rain. When the sun shines out again, you will see how everything will sprout and shoot up above the ground. It is just the right kind of weather for your radishes."

Harry's face brightened a little; he was very much interested in a square plot of ground that his father had given him to cultivate, and his first crop was to be radishes. His mother had promised to buy all that he could raise, and he anticipated quite a little fortune for the missionary cause. Still, he was not fully reconciled to the rain, and

as the large drops plashed against the window from which he was gazing on the wet park, he continued fretfully:

"But it rains all the time when I have holiday: it rained ever so much in Christmas week; and I know it won't stop for a month!"

"I think rainy days are nice," said Minnie, who was busy with her handkerchiefs; "you can get so much work done."

Harry laughed outright.

"A whole week hemming two handkerchiefs!" said he, scornfully; "you'll get rich fast."

"Minnie is doing a great deal more than hemming two handkerchiefs," replied her grandmamma, kindly, as she glanced at the disturbed little face; "she is learning how to work, and the next handkerchiefs will be easier. But what would you think, Mr. Grumbler, of four months of rain?"

"Four months?" repeated Harry—"not one clear day in four months?"

"Not many quite clear days," was the reply. "In Western India the monsoon, or rainy season, begins in May, and it rains some part of almost every day all the time that people here are enjoying the beautiful summer. And such rain! It comes down in perfect torrents, as if a quantity of pipes were being

emptied at once. A second or two will get a person thoroughly drenched if out in the rain in India."

"They must look like drowned rats," said Harry.

"They look more like very wet human beings," was the reply.

"But don't people get drowned there when they go out to walk after it has rained?" asked Minnie.

"No," replied Mrs. Wildford, "for all this water does not remain on the top of the ground. It soaks into the earth, or flows away, just as it does here, and the hot Indian sun dries the ground so soon that in a very little while after one of these drenching showers you would scarcely think it had rained at all. We know, however, that a great deal of water has fallen by looking at the rain-gnage."

"What is that, grandmamma?" asked Harry.

"It is an instrument for marking the rain, as the thermometer marks the heat or cold and the barometer the weather. By putting it where the water can reach certain marks, it is known how much rain falls on a level during each day; this is added up at the end of the season, and so they

find out how much rain falls in the course of a year."

"How much is it, grandmamma?" was the next question.

"It varies in different parts of India; some portions of the country have much more rain than others. In Bombay, if all the rain that falls from May till October were on the ground at once, it would make a lake eighty or ninety inches deep. How many feet is that, Harry?"

"Twelve inches one foot," said Harry, going over his tables; "why that would be six or seven feet—enough to drown us all."

"It is still deeper in Calcutta," continued his grandmamma, "which is much farther east than Bombay; there they have a hundred and eighteen inches of rain in the course of the year, and at the Mahableshwar hills, of which I am going to tell you when I come to my journey there, the year's rain would cover a level place three hundred inches, or twenty-five feet, deep."

"Oh," said Minnie, "what a dreadful place! I should be afraid of being drowned all the time."

"But very little of this water falls in one day," replied Mrs. Wildford; "an inch in twenty-four hours is considered a very heavy rain. Sometimes,

however, there is a great deal more than this in a day; in Bombay as much as ten inches has fallen in a day, and then there have been floods which destroyed property and lives."

"Where does the rain all come from?" asked Minnie; "I never could tell."

"Why, it comes from the clouds, of course," said Harry, quite importantly; "don't you see it pouring down now?"

"But how does it get into the clouds," continued his sister, in great perplexity, "and what keeps it from coming down all the time?"

"Answer that, if you can, Master Harry," said his grandmamma; "it is very easy to say that the rain comes from the clouds, but how does it get there?"

Harry looked somewhat confused, and Mrs. Wildford continued: "I am afraid you do not know quite as much as you would have us suppose. The rain comes from the ocean. The water of the ocean evaporates, or rises from it in the form of vapor, and this vapor goes up into the clouds. The great heat in tropical countries makes a great deal of vapor, and as much as twenty feet of water evaporates from the Indian Ocean every year. The air becomes heavy and wet with all this water,

and during the four months of the rainy season the wind blows from the south-west, and this warm air and its moisture are sent over the land. There it strikes the hills and is cooled so that it holds less water, and down falls the rain. In this way the great amount of water that falls in rain is brought by the wind from the distant ocean; it comes in the form of vapor, and in this form it travels a long distance."

"Thank you, grandmamma," said Minnie; "I am so glad that I know something about rain now, and how it gets into the clouds. I can understand now, too, why it is so damp just before it rains: it is because the wet vapor is coming over to us from the ocean."

"But only think of four months of wet vapor!" exclaimed Harry; "did you not get very tired of it, grandmamma?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wildford, with a smile, "but I think I told you how I managed with incurable things—I made the best of them. One of the worst phases of the rainy season occurs in the beginning of it; during the first ten days or so all the crawling creatures that ever were seen or heard of seem to come to light, and they become so frightfully active that there is no comfort in being

in the house, and it is equally uncomfortable to stay out in the rain. Scorpions, centipedes, huge spiders, lizards, cockroaches, beetles—"

"Oh, grandmamma," said Minnie, "I feel them crawling all over me."

"It's jolly!" exclaimed Harry, in great glee; "what fun it must have been to watch 'em all! Where were they, grandmamma?—on the walls?"

"Sometimes," was the reply, "and sometimes they would run across the floor so quickly that one scarcely saw them before they were gone. I remember a very long centipede that made me a visit when your mother was a baby. Her silver mug, with a little milk in the bottom of it, was left on the table in my dressing-room after she had taken her supper, and when I went to get the cup, I saw the tail of a centipede hanging over the edge. He had gone down, head foremost, after the milk, but he was so long that the cup would not accommodate him. Don't look so frightened, Minnie; he did not bite me. I called the khitmutgar, or footman, who, fortunately, happened to be a Mussulman, and he soon despatched him."

"But what had his being a Mussulman to do with it, grandmamma?"

"A great deal, my dear, as every one who goes

to India soon discovers. Many of the Hindoo castes will not kill the most obnoxious insect, for it is contrary to their religion, and I have seen my Brahmin pundit, while he was teaching me the language, pick up very objectionable insects that were traveling over his dress and throw them out of the window. His religion would not allow him to kill them, and as he knew that I objected to them, he thought he had done his duty by removing them from one place to another. But as vermin of all sorts abound in India, my feelings, as I watched his proceedings, were not very pleasant."

"Why, grandmamma," said Minnie, quite reproachfully, "you did not tell us anything about your Brahmin pundit. What was he like?"

"No, indeed!" chimed in Harry; "please let us hear about him."

"I really thought I had spoken of him," said Mrs. Wildford, "I have told you so much, but if you have not heard of my pundit, I must try to make up for the omission. And here comes Sarah just in time to hear the description."

"But you haven't heard about the rain in India, Sarah," said Minnie, regretfully; "it is too bad you missed that!"

"Yes," said Harry, "it was something worth

hearing, I can tell you, Sarah; rain in India isn't to be sneezed at—regular cats, and dogs, and pitchforks."

Sarah looked quite bewildered, and Mrs. Wildford replied: "I do not recognize my description at all, Harry; when you were in India, the storms must have been different. I have been speaking, Sarah, of the monsoon, or rainy season in India, which lasts four months, and the rain often comes down with great violence, while the thunder and lightning are very severe. This led to the scorpions, centipedes, spiders, etc., that are particularly lively at the beginning of the rainy season, and from that we went to the Brahmin pundit who taught me the language, and the children now want a description of him. This man was a small, fiery sort of a fellow, with very delicate hands and feet, and quite polished in his manners. He was very bigoted, and full of his importance as a Brahmin pundit, which is quite a different thing from being only an ordinary teacher."

"But I should not think," said Harry, "that such a great man among the Hindoos would have been willing to teach a Christian."

"The Hindoos," replied his grandmamma, "are very fond of rupees, and most of them will do any-

thing that will not injure their caste for the sake of money. This Brahmin who taught me came from a distant town, and to get to Bombay he had to take a sea-voyage of three or four days; in all that time no food passed his lips. He could not eat while in the ship, he said, because that would not have been allowable for him. When I asked him why, he replied that, on the ship, he could not pay puja to his god, nor bathe himself, which are regular observances before meals, and to omit these would have injured his caste."

"He must have been hungry when he got to Bombay," said Minnie.

"He probably was," replied Mrs. Wildford, "but even then, Minnie, he could not have been induced to eat the nice piece of beef that you seemed to enjoy so much at dinner to-day."

"Why, what was the matter then?" asked Harry, in surprise; "didn't he get all washed and fixed? I'm glad I am not a Brahmin pundit, to have to bathe before every meal! It comes hard enough on a fellow once a day."

"Meat was forbidden by the Brahmin's religion," continued his grandmamma, "and as the Hindoos consider the cow and ox sacred animals, they will tremble and turn livid when they pass a stall where

beef is sold, even spitting on the ground, as though the air contaminated them. One of their strongest terms of abuse is, 'Beef-eating Christian.' But to return to my Brahmin pundit: he always entered and left the room with a very polite salaam, and went at his work in quite a systematic way. He sat at my left hand, so that I could use the other for writing, and we spent two or three busy hours together every day. He was a great talker, and sometimes he laughed quite heartily at things that I said to him. I often wondered if he did not think it excessively funny for a man of his great learning to be teaching a woman, and one day I asked him this.

"He replied, sorrowfully, that it was very disgraceful indeed.

"'What do you think would be less so?' I inquired."

"Why didn't you order him out of the house, grandmamma?" said Harry, in quite a state of excitement; "the impudent fellow! to speak in that way to a lady, and my grandmamma!"

"I was not your grandmamma then, dear," was the reply, "and I did not even know of the honor in store for me. But seriously, Harry, I did not turn my teacher out of the house, because that would

have been a very foolish proceeding and a decided hindrance to my learning the language. His feeling about teaching a woman was not peculiar to himself: it was the feeling of his whole race. I was sorry for him, but I did not get in the least angry; indeed, he amused me very much, and I had many a good laugh in those study-hours. Your dear grandfather used to say that he felt very much like coming to see what was going on when he heard the laughter; his pundit was quite old, and a very grave, stupid sort of fellow."

"Did the Brahmin pundit who taught you answer that question you asked him, grandmamma?" said Minnie.

"Yes, my dear; he answered it in quite an unexpected fashion: it would be less disgraceful, he said, for him to take off his turban, throw the end of his purdikah over his head, fasten a bag to his cummer-bund, and taking a pair of cymbals in his hands to strike together and let people know that he was coming, pass through the town as a religious beggar, and gather into his bag the offerings of rice, fruit, etc., that would be given him at almost every house. I see, Minnie, that you wish me to explain what a purdikah is; here is one to speak for itself."

"Why, it's like Miss Minnie's dress, ma'am," said Sarah.

Yes, the soft India muslin was just the same, for the dress of which Sarah spoke had been a present to the missionary from a converted Brahmin, and the purdikah was nothing more than several yards of this material with a narrow bordering of pink.

"This purdikah," said Mrs. Wildford, "is thrown gracefully over the left shoulder, as you will see by this photograph, in which are several Brahmins."

"Hindoos of the highest caste," was printed on the back of the picture; "Idolaters, as the marks on the forehead show."

"The Brahmins," continued Mrs. Wildford, "consider the purdikah such a sacred garment that they will not let their wives touch it; they wash it and hang it out themselves."

"I'd like to see 'em at the ironing of it," said Sarah, rather grimly.

"I do not think it is ironed," was the reply; "I believe it is only pulled out as smoothly as possible while yet damp."

"Now tell us about the pundit, grandmamma," said Minnie, who began to fear that they would not hear much of him after all.

"I have not forgotten him, Minnie, and I believe I left off at his description of himself as a beggar. When he made me this uncomplimentary reply, I asked him why he did not become a mendicant, then, if it was less disgraceful than teaching me.

"He shrugged his shoulders in quite a French way as he said that one must live—so many Brahmins had been thrown out of employment since the English sirkahs had been in power. The peishwars, or native sovereigns, used to have the Brahmins about their courts, but their provinces were now so much smaller than they used to be that they could not support so many Brahmins, who were obliged to seek other pursuits.

"Sometimes I would ask my pundit about his wives and children, and he would answer my questions, but I could not be at all sure that he was telling me the truth. If one of his own race had asked him about his family, he would have resented it as an insult, but he knew that Christians had different customs, and that they were in the habit of asking such questions. I do not know that there is any more to tell you about my Brahmin pundit, but I was just going to tell you of a quantity of scorpions that were once brought to

your grandfather when you asked me about the pundit."

"Oh, do, grandmamma," said Harry, with great interest; "but what did grandpapa want with a lot of scorpions?"

"He did not want a lot of them," was the reply; "he wanted two specimens of a large black scorpion, different from the ordinary white scorpion, that is found on the outside of houses, and often on trees. He wished to preserve these in alcohol for scientific purposes, and he told one of the boys in school to bring him two of these scorpions, and he would give him six piec. A day or two afterward he was sitting in his study, a one-roomed building off from the house, when he saw quite a procession coming toward him, consisting of the boy who was to get the scorpions, the boy's father and mother, two little brothers and a sister. Each member of the family carried an earthenware jar, which they placed on the ground, while the boy said very gravely, 'Scorpions, sahib.'

"Your grandfather's mind was full of a very tangled piece of Hindostance that he had been studying, and for some moments he could not understand what all this meant, but when the father of the family ventured to repeat mildly, 'Scor-

pions, Padre Sahib—plenty, big and little,' it opened his eyes to the fact that the whole family, who were low caste and very poor, had gone on a regular scorpion hunt under the supposition that if the padre had promised six pice for two of the reptiles, he would be very much delighted with a hundred, and would probably pay them enough to buy rice for the whole season.

"They were on the point of unfastening all the jars at once and displaying their treasures, but your grandfather forbade this, and declared that he would only take the two he had ordered. These were enormous fellows, and when they were set at liberty, they scampered across the room like a flash; their liveliness, however, was soon subdued, and they were captured and safely lodged in a jar, when they were soon drowned in alcohol. The boy got his six pice, but the rest of the family departed in a state of sad resignation, carrying their scorpions with them. When your grandfather told me of this visit, I felt exceedingly glad that the study did not communicate with the house."

"I should think the scorpions would have stung the people who caught them," said Minnie.

"They know how to take them up," replied her grandmamma, "to avoid being stung. You

thought a bee-sting very bad last summer, little granddaughter, but the sting of a scorpion is so severe that strong, brave men actually cry with the fearful pain, which lasts six or eight hours."

"I never could go to India!" exclaimed Minnie, vehemently; "I do hope that no one will ever tell me it is my duty."

"Perhaps you will tell yourself so some day," replied Mrs. Wildford; "who knows? But now that I have told you of the unpleasant things the rainy season brought us, I must tell you of something very sweet the rainy season, after our return from Allabag, brought to me. Here is a picture of it."

"Why, it's a little baby!" said Minnie, "and it has a cap on. How funny!"

"Was it mamma?" asked Harry, eagerly.

"Yes," was the reply; "your mamma was once that baby, my little Ada, and she came to us in the rainy season like a bright, beautiful flower or a gleam of sunshine. Your grandpapa told me how the Hindoo servants greeted him, the morning after she was born, with a very low salaam and sad, sympathizing faces, as they said respectfully that they presented their best condolences to the Padre Sahib."

"Didn't they mean congratulations?" asked Harry.

"Not at all," replied his grandmamma; "they meant just what they said. The Hindoos consider it a great misfortune to have a daughter born to them; if asked how many children he has, a man will reply, 'One child, and two girls.' The cap that amuses you so much in the picture, Minnie, was always worn by children then, and the bare heads that we see on babies now would have been thought very ugly in those days. This cap was beautifully embroidered and trimmed with rich lace; it was the gift of a kind English lady in Bombay."

"Did mamma have a nice white nurse to take care of her in India?" asked Minnie.

"No," replied her grandmamma; "she had a very funny little black nurse, a girl about fourteen years old."

"A Hindoo girl, grandmamma?"

"No; Lilly was a regular negro girl, whom we got from a slave-ship that was captured by the English government just off the coast of Bombay. She was a very faithful little creature, very black and ugly in appearance, and she performed the most curious antics to amuse her little charge that

I ever saw accomplished by any human being. The baby liked the entertainment, though, and would crow with delight whenever Lilly began to twist her eyes and make up her curious faces."

"Grandmamma," said Minnie, suddenly, "did you not tell me once that this great bowl was an ostrich's egg?"

It looked like thick china, and was very prettily gilded and arranged as a bowl.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wildford, with a smile, "but that is a rather sudden jump, Minnie, from your mamma's little black nurse to an ostrich's egg."

"Well, I just happened to look at it while you were speaking," replied the little girl, "and I have always forgotten to ask you about it."

"I think," continued her grandmamma, "that you have remembered to ask me about as much as I could possibly tell you in the time. Now, do not prick up your ears, Harry, and expect to hear of an ostrich hunt, for there is nothing of the kind to tell."

"It is Wag who is pricking up his ears," replied Harry, laughing. "Just look at him now, grandmamma; he really thinks you are talking to him."

Having admired Wag sufficiently to satisfy his master, Mrs. Wildford said, as she took up the curious-looking bowl: "Yes, this was once an egg, and you can see how large it must have been, by what is left of it now."

"And did a bird really lay such an egg as that, ma'am?" asked Sarah, in surprise. "The birds in India must be a great deal larger even than the Shanghais."

"But the ostrich is not an Indian bird at all," replied Mrs. Wildford; "it is found only in Africa. The ostrich that laid this egg was kept in a private compound in Bombay as a great curiosity."

"Compound means garden or grounds, Sarah," said Minnie, quite importantly; "grandmamma told us all about it."

"People of wealth in India," continued Mrs. Wildford, "often keep a large collection of foreign animals—quite a menagerie, indeed—and they are very proud of showing them to strangers."

"Oh, yes, grandmmamma," said Harry, "I remember about the dewan's animals at Allabag, where you saw so many elephants. I'll tell you all about that, Sarah, some day; I guess it's time to kiss the family now, and go to bed."

"You speak as though kissing the family were

quite a piece of work," said his grandmamma, and, somehow, Harry did seem to make a piece of work of it with her.

"Sarah," said Minnie, whose curiosity had been very much excited by some soft, pretty knitting-work that the neat maid was very careful not to get soiled, "are you making something for me?"

"No, Miss Minnie," was the reply; "it is not for you."

"Who is it for, then?" in a tone of disappointment.

"Well, that is a secret," said Sarah, in some confusion; "I don't quite know, myself."

A little while ago, Minnie would have told the waiting-maid that she was "real hateful" in not gratifying her curiosity, but she had learned to be ashamed of such conduct, and she said nothing more, though wondering very much for whom Sarah could be working, and why she didn't know herself.

CHAPTER XI.

THE STORY OF GUNGA.

"I THINK," said Mrs. Wildford, when the little party were assembled next day, "that it is quite time for me to give you an account of some of our little Hindoo scholars. There were a number of interesting children among them, and there is one girl in particular of whom I have been thinking a great deal to-day."

"I am so glad, grandmamma!" exclaimed Minnie; "I want ever so much to hear about some of the little girls in your school."

"Girls are not half as nice as boys," observed Harry, "but I suppose that there have to be some girls in the world."

He glanced mischievously at his sister to see how she liked this, but Minnie would not look at him.

"This is quite a story," continued their grandmamma, "and I am going to call it

"GUNGA.

"This was the name of my heroine; she was named after the sacred river of the Hindoos, the river Ganges.

"She had a sister about a year younger than herself who was named Tulasi. Most of the Hindoo names have a meaning, and the Tulasi is a sacred shrub bearing small white flowers that have a delicate perfume. This shrub is often raised and carefully tended in boxes that are placed in front of Hindoo dwellings.

"When these sisters first came to the school, they were about eight and nine years old. They had no mother, and their father, who was quite an old man, was poor and of low caste. He lived in a mean little hut just out of the town, and worked hard for his scanty support. His daughters were married to idols, which means that their father had devoted them to the service of the temple, and when they were older, they would become dancing-girls. These dancing-girls are the very lowest class of women in India, and they lead very wicked lives.

"Although these children were so poor, they had silver bracelets on their arms and legs; indeed, it

is quite a puzzle how the poorer classes in India manage to get and keep these ornaments.

"There was nothing remarkable about these two girls, except that they were mischievous and rather inattentive to their lessons. I felt very much interested in them, because of the wretched life to which they were doomed as dancing-girls, and I knew that, had it not been for the pice a day that each received for coming to school, their father would have placed them in the temple instead. He was a very superstitious man, and very much afraid of the Brahmins, and I almost feared that every day would be the last the children would spend in school.

"Gunga was very pretty, with a great deal of spirit in her bright black eyes; she learned her lessons with very little trouble, but when she rattled through so glibly with the Lord's Prayer or verses of Holy Scripture, I scarcely thought that she understood what she said.

"Two or three years passed on, and Tulasi, who was the more quiet of the two, became sick. The children had always been very affectionate, and Gunga's protecting care toward the sister so little younger than herself was quite touching. I missed the girls from school for several days, and fearing

that they had at last been placed in the temple, I went to their father's hut to inquire about them.

"I found the sick child lying on a mat in the open door, while Gunga was cooking her father's rice.

"'Oh, Madam Sahib,' said Tulasi, while her eyes brightened, 'I have been telling Gunga that you are so good you would come to see me if you knew.'

"'And what is the matter with my little girl?' I asked as I sat down beside her.

"'I am sick all over,' she replied, 'and I cough and am tired.'

"I feared at once that the child had consumption, and when your grandfather saw her, he said that this was the case. I bathed her hot brow with some rose-water, and then cooled her hands in the same way.

"Tulasi seemed very grateful, and whispered: 'I love you much, Madam Sahib, but who will love poor Gunga when I am gone?'

"'Where are you going, Tulasi?' I asked.

"'I don't know,' she replied, a little wildly; 'I should like to go to the good Lord Jesus that your Shasters teach about, but I would not dare to be a Christian, it would make my father and the Brahmins so angry.'

"'I'd dare,' said Gunga, resolutely; 'I love my father, but I do not care for the Brahmins, and besides, I shouldn't tell any one that I was a Christian.'

"My heart yearned over the little stray lamb who seemed to be groping for light, and I tried to make her understand how the loving Saviour called the little ones to him and blessed them while he was here on earth.

"'That is very pretty,' said Tulasi; 'thank you, Madam Sahib. Now I will go to sleep;' and she curled herself on her mat with a contented smile.

"Bhagoo, the father, soon came in, and I told him that the Padre Sahib, who had studied medicine, would try to cure his child, if he were willing. He seemed very glad of this; indeed, the Hindoos appear to think that all white people are doctors, and they are very apt to beg the sahibs for medicine, no matter what their calling may be.

"Little Tulasi was very tenderly cared for, and although nothing could cure her, she lived for several months after my first visit to her. Many an hour did I spend beside her mat, for she was too weak to sit up much, and she learned to love the word of God that I read to her and the Christian prayers that were offered in her behalf.

"'I have got him!' she said, one day, very

brightly; 'I feel him in my heart! The Lord Jesus knows that Tulasi loves him, and he has come down now to stay with me all the time. Sing for me, Gunga—sing some of the pretty hymns that we learned at school.'

"Gunga's voice was very sweet, and she would sing with the tears rolling down her cheeks, for she could not bear the thought that her only sister would soon be taken away from her.

"Just before Tulasi died she called her father, who seemed very sad at losing her, and asked him to grant her one last request.

"He promised that he would do whatever she wished.

"'I am a Christian,' said the dying child; 'I love the Lord Jesus Christ, who died for me, and I want to be buried with the Christians when I die. You will promise me this, my father? You will not give my body to be burned?'

"Bhagoo solemnly promised his daughter that everything should be done as she desired, and with a sweet smile of thanks Tulasi sank back on her pillow. I had to leave her then for the night, and before morning her spirit was with the Saviour whom she loved.

"But what a sad story reached me of the poor

child's last moments! When the hand of death was plainly on her, Bhagoo, instead of keeping his promise, sent for a Brahmin, who came to perform his idolatrous rites over her. In spite of Gunga's tears and entreaties, Tulasi was not even allowed to die in her bed, for according to the Hindoo superstition, a dead body pollutes everything that it touches; she was dragged to the floor, and breathed her last on the hard earth. This was afterward cleansed and purified with cow manure, which the Hindoos always use for such purposes, and the body of poor little Tulasi was taken to the burning-ghat."

"What a wicked man," said Minnie, indignantly, "when he had promised his daughter that she should be buried like a Christian!"

"It was the one earthly thing for which Tulasi seemed to care," continued Mrs. Wildford, "but the Hindoos think nothing of breaking a promise, and the Brahmin wanted his funeral fees. So the little wasted body was made ready for burning, and when the pile had been lighted, Gunga was left to watch and keep up the fire and throw the ashes into the river when the fire had done its work."

"Did they leave poor little Gunga all alone there

to see her sister burn up on the funeral pile?" asked Minnie, shuddering.

"Yes, my dear little Minnie; the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, and it was very cruel to poor Gunga, but you must not forget that it was not really her sister that was burning, only the body she had worn; God had her spirit, the part that cannot die, in safekeeping.

"I will let Gunga tell the rest of the story. I did not know how bad it was until she rushed to the school one day in a passion of tears, and told me how they had left her alone late in the afternoon by the side of the little river where the burning was done.

"'It was dreadful,' said the poor child, 'to sit there and look at the fire that was burning up my little Tulasi, and it was so still around that I felt afraid. The sun was going down behind the hills, and a great black cloud seemed to hang over everything. I felt more and more afraid; I thought that I would die, too, and I sat and wept there by the water, for I did not believe that if I died I would go to the Lord Jesus, as Tulasi did: I was not good like her. Then I trembled all over, for Maha Deo came and talked to me.'"

"Was that the wicked Brahmin?" asked Harry.

"No," was the reply; "Maha Deo means almighty God, and poor little Gunga's conscience began to accuse her when she thought of death, and this she called God talking to her.

"'Maha Deo told me,' said she, 'Gunga, you have been a bad girl; you have often lied and stolen, and you have not minded what the Padre and Madam Sahib told you, and you were not always kind and patient with Tulasi, and you have such a bad heart that you must die for ever unless you get a new one. You must be a Christian or you will never see Tulasi again. And now, Madam Sahib,' said she, weeping very bitterly, 'I want to learn how to live like a Christian; I cannot be a heathen any longer. What can I do to try to live right?'

"'The first thing, my dear child,' I replied, 'is to give your heart fully and entirely to Him who so lovingly asks for it, and then you had better come to us and let this be your home. Here you will be with Christian friends who will care for all your bodily and spiritual wants because you are one of the little ones for whom Christ died.'

"But Gunga sadly refused.

"'You are very kind, Madam Sahib,' she replied, 'and I would love to come and live with

you. But I cannot leave my father; he is an old man now, and has no one but Gunga to cook his rice. I will not tell him that I am a Christian, for that, I believe, would kill him, but I must stay with him as long as he lives.'

"I told Gunga that she was quite right not to leave her old father; she must be faithful and do her duty, however hard, and leave the rest with God.

"She lingered as though she had something more to say; then looking stealthily around, she whispered hurriedly:

"'Do not tell any one, Madam Sahib; I did not throw the ashes into the river, as they bade me, for then the Lord Jesus could not find Tulasi when he comes to call the dead people to life. I dug a hole in the sand and put them there. Tulasi would like this better.'

"My heart was very full for the poor Hindoo child as I replied: 'I am glad that you remember the Scripture so well, Gunga, but be assured, my child, that the Lord will find his own again even in the depths of the ocean, for he has told us that the sea shall give up its dead. Live close to him always, and fear not them that can kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do,

but fear Him who can cast both soul and body into hell.'"

"What became of poor little Gunga, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, anxiously; "did her father kill her?"

"No," was the reply; "Bhagoo died in a few months after Tulasi's death, and then Gunga came to live at our little mission house. She soon became useful in the school as a teacher, and afterward she was one of our most faithful Bible-women, reading the word of God for hours at a time to different groups of her countrywomen. She died of cholera a few years after I left India, but it was a most triumphant Christian death."

"What a lovely story that is!" said Minnie, admiringly.

"Indeed, ma'am, it's beautiful," said Sarah, with tears in her eyes.

"I like that Gunga," observed Harry, approvingly; "she was a girl with some sense in her."

"We can all be like her in one way, Harry," replied his grandmamma, "and I think you know what it is."

But Harry only hung his head, and Mrs. Wildford continued: "The voice of almighty God that the poor desolate child heard by the river-

bank is too often stilled in our hearts; we grieve the Holy Spirit by refusing to listen to his teachings, putting them aside, perhaps, for a more convenient season. If Gunga had tried to comfort herself, after her sister's death, by thinking no more about it, and had refused to listen to Maha Deo, perhaps he would never have spoken to her again, and she would have lived and died a heathen."

The children looked very serious at this, and Sarah began to think that these stories about India had more in them than she expected.

CHAPTER XII.

WHITE JESSAMINE.

REMEMBER another little girl in our school at Bombay," said grandmamma, "whose story is quite different from Gunga's; her name was Shewanti, or White Jessamine."

"Oh," said Minnie, "isn't that lovely? I wish I had been named White Jessamine!"

"I don't," replied Harry; "it would have been a great bother to say all that, instead of Minnie."

"It is too late to talk about that now," said Mrs. Wildford, "and I want you to listen to the story of

"WHITE JESSAMINE.

"A little creature about six years old was brought to the school one day by her mother. She was extremely pretty and winning, with such a bright, mischievous face that she made every one smile who looked at her. Her clothing was very light indeed, as it consisted entirely of three brace-

lets on each arm, two ankle-bands and two or three toe-rings.

"Her small ladyship was married, as the toe-rings and the daub of red paint on her forehead proclaimed, but she was still in her mother's care, while her boy-husband was going to school from his father's house.

"Shewanti's mother wished us to take the child as a present; she did not mind her being made a Christian, she said, for she had not much caste to lose, and she found it very hard to live. We took the little flower thus offered us as God's gift, to be trained for his service, but we told the mother, very much to her delight, that she should not be entirely separated from her child, but that she might come to the mission house and visit her.

"The first thing we did with White Jessamine was to put some clothes on her, and she was speedily attired in a little tunic and saeque very much like these."

The children and Sarah examined the odd-looking little garments of red cotton with great interest, and Minnie wished that the little Hindoo girl herself were in the clothes now.

"She is quite a middle-aged woman by this time," replied her grandmamma, "and has several

children of her own, but then she was one of the dearest little things I ever saw. She was round and dimpled and a perfect sunbeam for smiling; ''cute' is the only expression that just describes her.

"White Jessamine soon proved to be a very lively young lady indeed, and committed endless pranks that were never very severely punished. A little shy at first, this soon wore off, and the merry mischief of her nature asserted itself."

"What did she do, grandmamma?" asked Harry; "she must have been a jolly little thing for a Hindoo."

"I can remember one of her freaks distinctly," said Mrs. Wildford, smiling at the recollection; "the funny little figure seems to rise before me now. She became very fond of the Padre Sahib, would hang about him and get more play out of him than any one else could accomplish, and one day she concluded to be the Padre Sahib herself. She arrayed herself in a complete suit of your grandfather's clothes, which in India were always of white linen, put on a straw hat of his, which came quite over her roguish little face, and with her morsels of feet fairly lost in a pair of his slippers, she stood in the school-room door and re-

ceived with the utmost gravity the bursts of laughter which greeted her appearance.

"She was such a comical figure that the Padre Sahib himself laughed, and then Shewanti fairly danced for joy."

"I am so glad nobody scolded her," said Minnie.

"It was not easy to scold White Jessamine," was the reply, "she was so loving and lovable. I think a very gentle reproof was administered on the impropriety of little girls dressing themselves in gentlemen's clothes and tumbling the Padre Sahib's linen, and she took it enough to heart to try a different prank next time.

"Shewanti learned with great quickness, and would laugh one moment and cry the next when anything pleased or saddened her in what she was studying. Her mother seemed very happy in the progress she made, and she was quite delighted when she saw Shewanti dressed 'almost like Madam Sahib.' The mother loved to come to the Christian services, but she did not live more than a year or two after we first saw her. She had become a humble follower of Christ, and she was the first native to whom we had the comfort of giving Christian burial.

"White Jessamine mourned for her mother with

a child's passionate grief, but soon the kindness that surrounded her brought back her smiles, and of her own accord she bestowed on me the title of 'Mamma Sahib.' I loved the child very dearly, and none the less so, I believe, that she seemed so devoted to my little Ada. She would play with her for hours together, and was always ready to give up her own pleasure to amuse the child."

"Mamma had some funny playmates, hadn't she, grandmamma?" said Minnie.

"To think of all the queer black people around her!" said Sarah, in great disgust; "didn't they frighten the baby, ma'am?"

"Not in the least," replied Mrs. Wildford, "because she was always used to them. Had they been suddenly brought before her, it would have been a different thing. Yes, Minnie, your mamma did have what would seem to you very funny playfellows, but I think she was quite as happy with them as you are with yours. Little Shewanti's pranks and roguish, laughing face were very attractive to a baby, and Lilly, her African nurse, was her especial delight.

"It was very sweet to us to watch the workings of White Jessamine's mind as she gradually grew to be a child of God; all the earnestness of her

nature was spent on heavenly things, and often have I seen her with the tears rolling down her cheeks as she studied the sacred narratives of the sufferings of our Lord.

"Once, when this had been the subject of her lesson, the children were playing blindman's buff, and it came to Shewanti's turn to be blinded. They were about tying the handkerchief over her eyes, when she broke away from them, exclaiming:

"'No! No! I cannot!'

"'But why?' they asked; 'why will you be so disobliging and spoil our play?'

"'Because,' sobbed the child, 'they blinded our dear Lord, and I know it isn't right.'

"The children were quite troubled at this, and brought the matter to me.

"I kissed my little White Jessamine, and told her that, while all tender love and reverence were due to the sufferings of Christ our Saviour, this was carrying the feeling farther than was reasonable, and she could do her part in blindman's buff without fear of committing sin in this respect.

"The April face brightened immediately, and no lighter foot or heart than Shewanti's joined in the play that afternoon.

"When this little convert first began to under-

stand the sinful nature of lying and deception, of which the Hindoos think so little, she could not endure the least deviation from truth, either in herself or others. She got up a little society among the children, which she called 'the truth-tellers,' and all who told a falsehood or who did not strictly speak the truth were marked in a little book that she kept for that purpose."

"I hope she wasn't a telltale?" said Harry, with great contempt.

"No," replied his grandmamma; "White Jessamine's nature was too noble for that. Her own name was as likely to be marked in this little record as any other, and it was never seen by the teachers. It was quite a check upon the children, who were allowed to see it once a week, but I did not know of it until some years afterward.

"Of course all the children in our school did not become Christians, and many of those who might have done so in time were taken away by their parents on the first symptoms of such a disgrace, as they called it. Some of those even to whom we gave Christian instruction would revile and oppose the truth among themselves, while those who loved sacred things formed a little band and stole away after night, while the others were

sleeping, for prayer and praise. White Jessamine was the prime mover in this; she was one of those bright, active spirits who seem destined to be at the head of everything, whether for mischief or for good.

"It was some little time before I discovered this habit of the children's; when I did, I told them that, although their object was a good one, they were really breaking the rules by getting up after they had been sent to bed, and that this was a bad example to others. I gave them a particular hour for their little meeting, and they were very obedient in observing it.

"These children, you must remember, were older in their characters and thoughts than children of the same age here, and to them the glad tidings of the gospel were as though some strange people should bring you accounts of a wonderfully beautiful and glorious country that you had never heard of before, but to which you might go and live there for ever amid its gold and precious stones, and delicious flowers and fruits, if you followed their directions about getting there.

"Some other day I will tell you of Shewanti's companions, and of the young Brahmin whom she afterward married. The boy to whom she was

married when she came to school refused to have her for his wife because she had become a Christian, but White Jessamine laughed, and said that she was very glad of it, because she did not wish to be married at all."

"That is so nice," said Minnie, when her grandmamma had finished; "it seems to me almost the nicest thing you have told us yet, grandmamma."

"I am very glad to find that you do not get tired of India," said Mrs. Wildford. "And how is it with you, Harry?"

"Why, grandmamma," replied the boy, frankly, "I did not think I would like it half so much when you said that I need not expect any elephants and things, and I am ever so much obliged to you for letting me come in here."

"And I'm sure I am, ma'am," said Sarah, gathering up her work; "a lady that can talk as much as you can ain't to be found in every family."

Mrs. Wildford laughed a little over Sarah's compliment when she had left the room, but, as it was well meant, she took it as it was intended.

CHAPTER XIII.

ELEPHANTA AND SALSETTE.

THE next day, when the children went into their grandmother's room for an Indian talk, as they called it, they found her very busy with some maps and a large marble-covered book that seemed to be full of writing.

"I have been looking over my journal," said Mrs. Wildford, "and wondering if I could not give you a better idea of Bombay and the surrounding country than I have yet done. It is so entirely different from anything here that I should like, if possible, to make you see it with my eyes. Come here, Harry, and read this little account from the letter of another traveler in India."

Harry read the following description very nicely:

"The various tribes of the countries through which I have passed interested me extremely. Their language, the circumstances of their habitation, dress and armor, their pastoral and agricultural way of life, their women grinding at the mill,

their cakes baked on the coals, their corn trodden out by oxen, their maidens passing to the well, their travelers lodging in the streets, their tents, their camels, their shields, spears and coats of mail, their Mussulmans with a religion closely copied from that of Moses, their Hindoo tribes worshiping the same abominations with the same rites as the ancient Canaanites, their false prophets swarming in every city and foretelling good or evil as it suits the political views of their employers, their judges sitting in the gate, and their wild Bheels and Thoolies dwelling, like the ancient Amorites, in holes and clefts of the rocks, and coming down with sword and bow to watch the motions or attack the baggage of the traveler,—transported me back three thousand years, and I felt myself a contemporary of Joshua or Samuel."

"All this," said Mrs. Wildford, "is so true that I had almost the same feeling when I went to India. The more I traveled and saw the customs of the people, the more it seemed as though I had indeed gone back three thousand years, instead of living in the nineteenth century. But before I tell you any more of these travels, which, as I said at first, were not very extensive, after all, I am going to talk of some remarkable places near Bombay.

Here is a map of the island and the places all around it, and I am going to read you what another traveler said of it many years before I went there:

"'Nothing can be more delightful than the rides and drives in this island. They extend twenty-one miles, and communicate with the neighboring island of Salsette by means of a causeway. The prospect is as grand and as beautiful as can be imagined; the mighty range of the Ghauts towering in the clouds and extending as far as the eye can reach, the bold views on the continent, the diversified objects on the island, old ruinous convents and monasteries erected by its former conquerors, the Portuguese, the noble country-houses of the Europeans, Hindoo pagodas, Mohammedan mosques, the remains of Mahratta forts and buildings,—these, with the rural appearance of Hindoo villages, where every patch of ground is richly cultivated or ornamented and interspersed with groves of date and cocoanut trees, afford a prospect of luxuriance and beauty to be met with nowhere but in the Concan.

"'As we turn our eyes toward the sea, we are presented with a fine hard beach running on to the high and romantic spot called Malabar point, which promontory is studded with neat villas, while the

city and fort are seen in the background, with the ships securely at anchor in the harbor.

"'Nor must we forget the isthmus called Colaba (probably Cāl-āb, or black water) running for about two miles in a straight line from Bombay, from which it is separated at high water. On this small island, which scarcely exceeds a quarter of a mile in breadth, are several good houses and a range of barracks. At its farthest or western end stands a noble signal and lighthouse, from the top of which is a very fine view of the island and adjacent country.'"

"Did you think Bombay a beautiful place, grandmamma?" asked Harry.

"I did, indeed," was the reply. "It looked to me almost like a second Eden. Of that interesting country it may truly be said, as in the missionary hymn,

'Where every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.'

I am going to tell you to-day," continued Mrs. Wildford, "of the visit we made to the Cave of Elephanta."

"Do elephants really live in caves?" asked Minnie. "I thought they were so large that they had to stay in groves or on the banks of rivers."

"I never heard of any but *stone* elephants that were found in caves," replied her grandmamma. "Elephanta, or Shapooree, is the name of a small island about two hours' sail from Bombay. A great many travelers and parties of pleasure go there to spend the day. They get into a bundur or wharf-boat, of which I told you in my journey to Allabag, and sail or row across the beautiful harbor to the curiously-shaped island, which looks like a double-headed hill rising out of the sea. When we reached the shore, there was a long up-hill walk to be taken through a narrow valley that separates the mountains, and I became very tired before we got to the open space that surrounds the rock-hewn temple, for Elephanta is really a cave-temple hewn out of the solid rock no one knows how many thousands of years ago."

"Oh," said Harry, "that is like the Catacombs of Rome, grandmamma, where the Christians used to worship for fear of the wicked emperors."

"Not much like the Catacombs, Harry," replied his grandmamma, sadly. "These cave-temples of India (for there are a great many of them in various places) are not underground, but cut in the mountains, and a great deal of time has been spent in carving the stone pillars and the figures of their

gods that are sculptured on the walls. They have not been used as burial-places, like the Catacombs—for the Hindoos, you know, burn their dead—and instead of telling us, like these humbler temples, of the beautiful faith of the early Christians, they are full of the symbols of idolatry, with all its abominations.

"The walk, which seemed to me so long because we were ascending the hill, is only about three-quarters of a mile from the landing, and it was really very pretty, being part of the way through woods, and sometimes on the very edge of a precipice. At the entrance of the temple are immense stone pillars, on which the whole mountain above seems to rest. Wild vines and shrubs grow on the summit of the hill, and hang down, so that the foliage twines over the front of the temple. This is about one hundred and thirty feet long, and the stone columns that support it are arranged so that there are three openings, through which we could look only into darkness."

"Then you did not see the inside at all!" said Minnie, in a disappointed tone. "I wanted so much to know about the inside."

"Do not be too fast, little granddaughter. There are such things as torches that are intended espe-

cially for caves, and with this help you may be sure that we did not leave Elephanta without exploring the inside. We found the roof quite flat, and the heavy pillars were in rows all the way back to the end of the cave. On the sides of the walls were immense figures of various Hindoo gods—Gunputti with his elephant head; a god with four faces riding on a bird, and Siva, the head god of India, under different forms. At the very end of the cave, in a large recess, there is a figure of their triad god, much larger than life, with three heads, and in another place is Siva, who wears a necklace of human skulls, and has the dreadful cobra or hooded snake of India close beside him."

"A real snake?" asked Minnie.

"No, my child; this one is of stone, but real snakes are often found in these caves, particularly in the rainy season. We did not see any, however, and I do not think that I once thought of them at Elephanta. This wonderful temple, although of stone, is really in a state of decay; the heavy rains injure it every year, because, as there is no way of draining off the water, it lies there for a long time. Many of the stone pillars have been worn away from the ground, so that only the tops are left hanging from the roof in a very curious fashion.

On the island of Elephanta, about a quarter of a mile from the landing, there is a huge stone elephant with an animal on its back that is supposed to have been intended for a tiger. The name of the island is taken from this stone image."

"Did you go to any of these other places, grandmamma?" asked Harry as he studied the map.

"Yes," was the reply, "we also visited Salsette, which, as you will see, is another island near Bombay, and it is a very beautiful one."

"More caves, too, grandmamma? It says here, 'Caves of Thanheri.'"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wildford, "Salsette is full of interest, and as we wished to acquaint ourselves with the condition of the people on the island, we spent three or four days there. There is a narrow causeway from Bombay to Salsette, and over this we drove in a bullock cart, instead of going by water."

"What is a bullock cart?" asked Minnie.

"It is a queer-looking vehicle on two wheels, drawn by bullocks or oxen, that in India takes the place of our hacks, or public carriages. Here is a picture of one with the godswallah, or driver."

The children thought it funny enough, and Sarah pronounced it "heathenish looking."

"I am sorry to say," continued Mrs. Wildford, "that I startled our godswallah very much during this journey by telling him to *go as fast as he could because I was possessed with a devil.* I meant to say that I was suffering with hunger, and wished him to drive quickly to the nearest town, but I did not understand the language very well then, and I frequently made mistakes. Your grandfather laughed heartily, but the man seemed to think me rather dangerous, and the poor bullocks were indeed driven with a vengeance.

"Our journey through Salsette was really lovely; part of the time we were in a valley, and the hills on each side of us were covered with beautiful shrubs, while we passed whole groves of mango and palm trees. But there were very few people to be seen; at one of the villages, named Gorabunder, which was only a group of very poor-looking huts, we found that the inhabitants got their living by burning charcoal. They were a caste by themselves with whom other Hindoos would have nothing to do, except to buy their charcoal in a very curious way. The Gorabunder people took it in loads to some particular spot and left it there; the Hindoos carried it away, and left in payment tools of different kinds, rice and

clothes, which the charcoal-burners could not get for themselves. These poor people were very wild and ignorant, and the Hindoos treated them with the utmost contempt.

"At a place called Toolsey we came upon a large party of friends who had planned this pleasant surprise for us. The place was very pretty, full of fine trees and surrounded by high mountains. Our friends had pitched their tents in one of the groves, for they were out on a picnic, and the white and colored dresses of the Mohammedan, Hindoo and Parsee servants, the five Arab horses tied under the trees, the crowd of bullock carts and native drivers, fires for cooking and the tangled beauty of the jungle, formed a picture that could be found nowhere else."

"Grandmamma," said Harry, "what is a jungle? I thought it was a dreadful place where only tigers lived."

"Tigers do have their lairs in jungles, as a general thing," was the reply, "but every jungle has not tigers in it. This is the common name in India for a thicket of any kind. Tigers were said to be plentiful on the island of Salsette, but we probably frightened them away from our immediate neighborhood, as we did not even have a distant

glimpse of one. There are wildcats and rattlesnakes in some parts of America, yet we should be very much surprised to have foreigners ask us how we could live in such a dreadful country, where there were wildcats and rattlesnakes.

"We found a morning ride through the woods at Salsette perfectly delicious. The air was cool and fresh from a recent shower, and the numerous singing birds made a concert for us all the way. The trees, too, seemed to be full of monkeys, who kept up an incessant chatter and amused us with their pranks. If we had been able to feel that it was right for us to do nothing but to seek our own happiness, I think we would have pitched our tents for life at Salsette.

> 'But only he who bears the cross
> Can hope to wear the glorious crown,'

and the motto of the true Christian is ever 'Onward.'

"The caves of Thanheri were to be visited before we left the island, and some of our friends went with us to see these wonderful temples. Our road lay through a very dense jungle, from which I almost expected to see a tiger spring upon us, but no such catastrophe happened.

"Thanheri is quite different from Elephanta. There are a number of caves of various sizes on both sides of a high, rocky hill, but these temples have nothing to do with the Hindoo religion. The first inhabitants of India were Buddhists, or worshipers of Buddha, and many of the caves seem to have been used by monks or hermits who devoted themselves to the service of this god. The largest cave is a temple in the form of a Christian church, but here, alas! the resemblance ends, for an immense statue of the false god Buddha stands at each side of the entrance. The temple is very beautiful; it has rows of finely-carved pillars with lions at the top, and the walls are ornamented with a row of sculptured figures."

"But who did all this, grandmamma?" asked Harry.

"That is just what we do not know," was the reply, "because it seems impossible to discover the age of these temples. There is an inscription on one of the stone pillars, but it is written in a language that no one can understand; we only know that it does not honor the true God. The roof of this cave is not flat, like that of Elephanta, but arched, and ornamented in ribs with the close, heavy wood of the teak tree. There is one large

room fifty feet long and about twenty wide, and on three sides of this room there is a row of eight-sided pillars. At the extreme end there is a half circle, and in this a dome carved out of the rock. This dome is a symbol of the Buddhist faith, and earlier travelers say that there used to be on the top a large gilt umbrella."

"What a funny thing for a temple!" said Harry; "it never rained in there, did it?"

"The folly of idolatry," said Mrs. Wildford, "is only equaled by its wickedness. There is no sense in the gilt umbrella, nor in the many-headed and many-handed gods that are so often found in these heathen temples.

"It was pleasant to leave such a place and see how much more beautiful God had made the world outside, and to feel that he had raised a temple to his own honor in the very hills and woods and valleys around us that would outlast the most perfect work of man. The view on top of the hill from which the cave-temples are cut is particularly beautiful, and I wished that I could have brought away with me a good picture of it.

"We found the people of Salsette in a very sad condition; few of them could read, and when we tried to tell them of the one eternal God and

Saviour, their minds could not seem to comprehend it. We might not linger, for we were needed at Bombay, and we left the island with feelings of sorrow that the dwellers in that lovely spot seemed so little better than the beasts that perish."

"Well," said Minnie, with a sigh, "I wish that I could remember it all, grandmamma, but I don't believe I know now which is Elephanta and which is—that other place."

"Girls are smart!" observed Harry, contemptuously; "when you want to think of them, you can recollect that there are elephants in the cave of Elephanta, and tigers at 'the other place.'"

Minnie was quite bewildered: "Is that right, grandmamma? I didn't remember you saying so."

"No, my dear, it is not right, and neither is somebody else right. Do not forget, Harry, that you are two years older than your sister, and if you are so much more clever, you should help her, instead of leading her astray."

Harry was penitent in a moment.

"Come, Minnie," said he, affectionately—"or White Jessamine, if you like that better—let's make it up. I won't tell you any more stories, and perhaps I really can help you about the caves when we come to talk them over."

"Grandmamma," said Minnie, when her brother had gone to his lessons, "I do love Harry very much; if he does tease me, he is always so good after he has been bad."

"That," replied her grandmamma, smiling, "was one of White Jessamine's funny sayings. She said she always felt so good after she had been naughty."

"I want to hear more about her," said Minnie; "don't you, Sarah?"

Sarah replied that she would like it very much, but that she thought everything Mrs. Wildford told them was very nice.

"I cannot promise you much more about White Jessamine," said grandmamma, "but at our next talk I will tell you about White Jessamine's husband."

"Oh," exclaimed Minnie, "I am so glad! I want to hear about him ever so much. I hope he was very nice indeed, grandmamma?"

"We thought so," replied Mrs. Wildford. "But I am going to invite my company to leave me now."

"One good kiss first," said Minnie, warmly; "you are just the dearest grandmamma that ever lived!"

CHAPTER XIV.

THE YOUNG BRAHMIN.

"DO turn those monkeys out!" said Mr. Bolton as he saw the children making a rush for their grandmamma's room after dinner; "they must be a perfect nuisance!"

"I will turn them out as soon as I get tired of them," was the smiling reply, "but just now I cannot do very well without them."

Harry felt very much elated at this, and grandmamma was quite amused at the air with which he walked into the room.

"Now," said Minnie, almost before they were seated, "tell us about White Jessamine's husband, please."

"His name was Ram Ganesha," said Mrs. Wildford, "and here is a picture of him in his Hindoo dress, before he became a Christian; you see that he wears the Brahminical turban and purdikah, and here is the sacerdotal or threefold cord over his left shoulder. This cord is laid aside at baptism."

"He's a real cross-looking fellow," said Harry.

"He was not cross-looking," replied his grandmother, "but he was very earnest, and in having his photograph taken, he seems to have been looking very solemn for fear of spoiling it."

"I think I should be afraid of him," said Minnie, after studying the picture a while, "he looks as if he knew so much."

"He was very learned for so young a man," replied Mrs. Wildford. "But I shall begin my story regularly, and call it

"THE YOUNG BRAHMIN.

"Your grandfather first became acquainted with Ram Ganesha by employing him as teacher for a school that he superintended a few miles from Bombay."

"Was he a heathen *then?*" asked Harry.

"Yes; he was a very strict Brahmin, and we were as glad to get such teachers as they were to be employed. They brought the children on nicely in their reading, and they were quite willing to teach them the Lord's Prayer and the commandments, and whatever other Scripture lessons we appointed. They said it would do them no harm, and there was really a great deal of good in our Shasters."

"It seems very funny," said Harry, "to have heathens to teach the children about the Bible."

"It does seem so, I know," was the reply, "but we had so few Christian teachers that we did just the best we could, and we found our Brahmins perfectly trustworthy. The children had to be first taught to read in their own language, and as Hindoos understood this better, they could teach them better than we could.

"Ram Ganesha was a great favorite with us; his manners were very courteous, and his information on general subjects so extensive that your grandfather enjoyed a chat with him very much. Of religion he would not speak at all; whenever the subject was introduced, he would make his salaam just as soon as politeness would let him, or, if obliged to stay, he became rigidly silent. He was said to be an unusually strict Hindoo, and a devoted worshiper of the elephant-headed Gunputti, after whom he was named: Ganesha is only another form of it."

"What a pity," said Minnie, "when he was so nice!"

"He came out all right," replied Harry, "didn't he, grandmamma?"

"I never like to tell the end of my story at the

beginning," said Mrs. Wildford. "Ram Ganesha gave his pupils a holiday on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons, and on these occasions he was very apt to ride over to Bombay and pay a visit to the missionary's study, to give him an account of matters and things at the school. One afternoon he came, as usual, but he was evidently very much troubled about something; he scarcely spoke a word, and appeared to hear very little that was said to him.

"Your grandfather supposed that something had happened in the school, and tried to question him about it, but Ram Ganesha said hurriedly that the school was doing well, and then mounted his horse and rode off. The missionary was quite puzzled by this strange conduct, and it was some time before the mystery was cleared up.

"That you may understand it from the beginning, I am going to take you to the tank just outside of the city."

"Isn't that a dark place full of water?" asked Minnie.

"It is full of water," replied her grandmamma, "but it is not dark. These tanks are very common in India; they are square places dug in the earth and lined with stone or chunam; the rains

fill them with water, and men and women come with their pitchers, as Rebecca did to the well. Flights of stone steps lead down into the tank, which is also used to bathe in by the water-loving Hindoos, and flowers and shrubs are often planted around it. It is a favorite resort of the Brahmins and chief men of the city in the cool of the day, and it was at the tank that our young friend Ram Ganesha became so unsettled. It is a very common thing at these gatherings to have a sort of debating-society; the Hindoos are very fond of argument, and they listen attentively to the most long-winded discussions. Every man has a right to his say, and no one interrupts him until it is finished.

"On the evening in question a kubeer-punt appeared before the Brahmins and attacked them boldly upon the subject of idolatry. He told them very truly that to be an idolater was utterly unworthy of a reasonable being, and asked them how men of their learning could believe and teach so preposterous a doctrine.

"He was very bold and very eloquent; the answers of the Brahmins were knocked to pieces by him as soon as they were uttered, and that grave and dignified body were very much scandalized by the proceedings. Ram Ganesha fairly trembled with

indignation, and could scarcely wait for his elders to finish before he rushed to the rescue. He was quite ashamed of their acquitting themselves so badly before the kubeer-punt, and his blood boiled to avenge the insults heaped upon the gods.

"The kubeer-punt found him a stronger adversary than he had yet encountered, and he listened admiringly to the mingled attack and defence poured upon him by the young Brahmin. He stood his ground, however, and came off victorious; the Brahmins had to acknowledge themselves vanquished, as far as words went, and Ram Ganesha took it so much to heart that he could neither eat nor sleep. That man, he thought, must be answered, and his doctrine annihilated, but how to do it?

"While thinking deeply over the matter, the simple catechism containing the first principles of Christianity which he taught in the school came into his mind. That would do—why not? He would vanquish the kubeer-punt with the Christian doctrines; no matter what weapons were used, so that the blasphemer did not triumph.

"He proposed it to the Brahmins, and found them quite of his mind; then he went vigorously to work to study Christianity as he had never

studied it before. He was surprised at it; the more keen and searching the light brought to bear upon it, the more its truth and beauty flashed upon his mind. 'This is true,' he said to himself—'this is true, and we are all wrong!'

"But the kubeer-punt must be answered: that was the main thing just now; and an evening having been fixed for a second discussion, the Brahmins were all in their places at the tank, and with them the kubeer-punt.

"Ram Ganesha was allowed to begin, and he opened the argument in a way that was quite unexpected to his adversary. He would not speak, he said, of the holy gods whom the kubeer-punt had reviled: he would let that pass for the present; he wished to be answered first on some other points. He would show the kubeer-punt that his doctrine was altogether wrong, for if he followed it out consistently, he would end by being a Christian.

"I cannot repeat to you the words that Ram Ganesha used, nor is it necessary to do so; it is sufficient to say that he had mastered his subject thoroughly, and the arguments were so well arranged that the circle of Brahmins listened in admiring delight, while the kubeer-punt was utterly

amazed to be attacked by a Hindoo with weapons from the Christian armory.

"He could not answer the young Brahmin, and the question was for the first time brought to his mind, Why was he not a Christian? He would hear more of this new doctrine, and leaving the field to his opponent, he walked thoughtfully home to reflect on what he had heard.

"Ram Ganesha was flushed with his victory and elated by the compliments and congratulations of his elders; they pronounced him a finished actor, and declared that, if they had not known him, they would have taken him for a Christian. One shrewd old fellow took it upon himself to make the young man a private visit of inspection; he had his suspicions of Ram Ganesha, who seemed much too well acquainted with the Christian arguments for his own good, but when he charged his young brother with leaving the religion of his fathers, Ram Ganesha carried on the character he had assumed with the kubeer-punt, and answered so calmly and forcibly that the old Brahmin scarcely knew what to make of him.

"He repeated matters to the other Brahmins, but they laughed at his suspicions. 'It was only more of his capital acting,' they said; 'Ram Ganesha was

a clever fellow, and he meant to make the most of his joke.'

"Meanwhile, an inward uneasiness gave Ram Ganesha no peace, and he became so grave and absent-minded that he scarcely seemed like the same person. He saw that he must make a choice: on the one hand, Christ and heaven; on the other, his parents, his friends, all his hopes of earthly honor and happiness. The vision of St. Paul at Damascus seemed to open before him, and the tender love of the gentle reproach, 'Why persecutest me?' sank into his heart. It was this heavenly love that haunted him; it was so different from anything in the Hindoo belief that it filled his thoughts continually.

"During this season of indecision, Ram Ganesha resolved to visit the Padre Sahib and open his heart to him, but when he got there, he could not speak; he felt that this would be committing himself, and he was not quite ready. He wished that he had never seen the kubeer-punt, who was the cause of all his trouble, for, now that his eyes were opened, he could not put himself back where he was before.

"At length the struggle was ended; he prostrated himself before the loving Saviour, with the

inquiry, 'Lord, what will thou have me to do?' He had fully counted the cost, and he did not shrink from the sacrifice. He went again to the missionary, whose heart was filled with joy at what seemed to him little short of a miracle.

"'Now,' said Ram Ganesha, when he had finished his story, 'you must direct me, my father, what to do; what is required of me, in the first place, as a Christian?'

"'You can no longer keep your school,' replied the missionary, thoughtfully, 'for your life would not be safe there. You had better come to us for the present that you may keep out of the hands of the Brahmins.'

"For you must know that such is their hatred of native converts they will even kill a person who is supposed to be in danger of becoming a Christian. They think it reasonable enough that people of another nation shall be of what religion they please, but for a man to leave the religion of his forefathers is not to be tolerated for a moment.

"'I will do as you say, Padre Sahib,' said Ram Ganesha, after a moment's reflection, 'but I have always been a dutiful son; I must first look upon the faces of my parents for the last time in this

world. They will, you know, disown me as soon as they find that I am a Christian.'

"'But are you not afraid,' asked your grandfather, 'that they will keep you with them by force, rather than let you disgrace your family by becoming a Christian?'

"'I shall not tell them that I have changed,' was the reply; 'I will see them once more as though nothing had happened, and write to them on my return.'

"'But will you deny Christ?' continued the missionary, earnestly; 'occasions will arise to tempt your faith, and I think that, under the circumstances, the visit is an unwise one.'

"'I can manage,' said Ram Ganesha, confidently, 'and I *must* see my mother, who loves me very dearly, once more before she dies.'

"The missionary gazed after the young convert with a heavy heart as he rode away; he feared that he might not see him again alive, or that, under strong temptation, he would return to heathenism. His parents lived at Ahmednuggur, a city which you will find here on the map just beyond the Concan, and it would probably be a week before anything was heard of him.

"The first news from Ram Ganesha was not satis-

factory. A hurriedly-written note was received, which read: 'Come quickly, my dear friend, if you think me worth the trouble. I am a prisoner, and see no way of escape unless you help me.'

"Your grandfather did not stop for anything, except to write to a friend at the next town to have a horse ready for him, as his own would need rest by the time that he reached it, and with a hurried farewell to me he set forth on his journey.

"He found the fresh horse and some very acceptable refreshment, and without stopping to rest himself, he pushed on to the next station. It was very warm and the roads were dusty; the missionary's white clothes were quite brown by the time he arrived at the end of his day's journey.

"He had intended to spend the night at the travelers' bungalow, which afforded nothing but a bare shelter, but an English officer in the place who knew him insisted on taking him to his house, where a bath and supper and pleasant society soon revived him. His own horse was sent on here, as he had requested, and early the next morning he started again.

"When he had gone about three-quarters of the way, a note was handed him from the magistrate of the town where he had stopped the day before

telling him that the man he sought was there. Back he went, full of hope, and soon had the pleasure of shaking hands with Ram Ganesha, who had a long story to tell.

"When he got to his father's house at Ahmednuggur, he found no one there but his mother; his father had gone on a journey and his elder brother was out. His mother loaded him with caresses, and then, in the excess of her joy at seeing him so unexpectedly, she prepared him a dinner of the best the house afforded.

"'Come, my son,' said she, affectionately, to him; 'the food is ready; pay puja (that is, offer religious worship) to Gunputti, and then eat and refresh yourself.'

"Here was a dilemma that Ram Ganesha was not prepared for; he had counted on the presence of his elder brother in his father's absence, and in that case he would not have been called upon to perform puja, as this duty always fell to the eldest male member of the family then present.

"He scarcely knew what to do, for he could not bear to give his loving mother such a blow as a confession of his faith would be, and he replied confusedly: 'Oh, never mind about puja, mother.'

"'*Never mind about puja!* Why, my son, are you crazy?'

"'There is no use in it,' he continued, more boldly; 'Gunputti cannot hear us.'

"While his mother was staring wildly at him his elder brother came in.

"'Do you hear him?' she cried; 'he will not pay puja! He has been listening to the vile, beef-eating Christians!'

"His brother looked at him fixedly, and Ram Ganesha braced himself for the worst.

"'Are you a Christian?' was the question he had been expecting.

"'I am,' he replied, boldly. The time had come for him to confess or deny Christ, and he remained firm.

"'Have you been baptized and received among the Christians?' continued his brother.

"'No,' said Ram Ganesha, 'but I intend this so soon as I return.'

"His brother replied by closing the door upon him and fastening it. They had him now in safe-keeping, and so long as he had not been baptized his caste was not lost, and there were yet hopes of him. They would get the Brahmins there, and see what arguments and threats could do to turn

him from his purpose, but rather would they lose him by death than have him disgrace his high caste by turning Christian.

"Poor Ram Ganesha was sorely tried for a young, inexperienced convert, but the Brahmins found him more than a match for them, as he had the advantage of a thorough knowledge of their religion as well as of his own, and when they found that they could do nothing with him in argument, they threatened his life.

"They left him in a rage, and Ram Ganesha hastily scratched off a few lines to your grandfather and a similar note to the English head of native police at Ahmednuggur. Then he watched through the iron grating that in India answers the purpose of a window, for a passing boy to carry his notes. Boys are not difficult to find anywhere, and Ram Ganesha called to the first one that appeared, offering him two pice to take his letters to the office. The boy, who did not know that he was a prisoner, readily consented, and having done all that he could to help himself, the young Brahmin committed his cause to God and awaited the result.

"This came sooner than he expected in the shape of a file of sepoys, or native soldiers, with the mar-

shal at their head. He knocked at the door, and Ram Ganesha's brother called out from within to ask what he wanted.

"'We want Ram Ganesha.'

"'He is not here,' was the reply.

"'He is here,' said the marshal, 'and, moreover, he is a prisoner. Open the door, or I shall break it down.'

"To refuse any longer was useless, and the door was opened.

"'Now, my good woman,' continued the officer, 'where is your son, Ram Ganesha?'

"'He is in his room, sick,' replied the mother; 'he cannot be disturbed. You can have no business with him.'

"'Lead me to him at once,' said the marshal, 'or his door shall be forced.'

"Trembling and powerless, the mother and brother did as they were ordered, and the prisoner saw that release was at hand.

"'Ram Ganesha,' said the marshal, 'are you kept here against your will?'

"'I am,' was the reply.

"'Do you wish to leave this place?'

"'I do.'

"'You are free, then, to go where you please.'

"Ram Ganesha's mother cursed him as he passed out, and his brother scowled fiercely upon him; he went forth sadly from the home that had become a prison, and his first thought was to get back to his missionary friend at Bombay. The marshal kindly gave him a guard of soldiers to the next station, and there he was told that his kind friend had passed through the place only the day before on his way to him.

"On the first opportunity, Ram Ganesha confessed Christ before men, and was received into the Christian Church. The name of Paul was given to him in baptism at his own request, for his conversion seemed to him scarcely less remarkable than that of the apostle whose faith and zeal he desired to emulate.

"His family, feeling that he was now lost to them for ever, sent for Brahmins and friends, and had his funeral rites performed as though he were really dead. His elder brother took the disgrace so much to heart that he renounced all worldly pleasure and comfort, and wandered from place to place as a fakir, or religious devotee.

"Ram Ganesha, or Paul, as he must now be called, also went from place to place to preach the gospel to his fellow-countrymen, and on one

of these journeys he found his brother almost stripped of clothing, daubed with ashes and dirt, sitting between two fires, with the burning sun of India beating on his unsheltered head.

"He would not listen, at first, to Paul's words, and ordered him out of his sight, as one who had brought heavy sorrow upon him, but the Christian brother persevered, and the light of the gospel finally dawned upon that clouded mind. He was washed and clothed and brought to the mission house, and Paul's joy over him was shared by all his Christian friends."

"Well, grandmamma," said Minnie, "Ram Ganesha *was* nice, I think, and I'm glad he married White Jessamine. How old was she when she was married?"

"About seventeen, I think," was the reply.

"Did she grow up pretty?" asked Harry.

"Very pretty, indeed," said Mrs. Wildford, "and she was such a bright, *sunshiny* Christian that it was a pleasure to be near her. She was just the right kind of wife for Paul, who was inclined to be grave and reserved, and they did a great deal of good together among the natives."

CHAPTER XV.

JAYAH AND RAMKOOR.

"DO try and think of some more stories, grandmamma," pleaded Minnie, on the next afternoon; "I like them so much. Weren't there any nice little girls in the school besides Gunga, and Tulasi, and White Jessamine?"

"*I* want to hear about a boy," said Harry.

"You had a boy last time," replied his sister; "Ram Ganesha was a boy."

"Rather an *old* boy, I think," said Mrs. Wildford, "but I dare say that Harry will be willing to hear about two or three little girls."

Harry looked very willing indeed, and his grandmamma continued:

"I cannot tell you a great deal about them, because there is not much to tell, and I dare say you will think what there is very sad. Several years after White Jessamine came to us a dear little girl named Jayah was brought into the school."

"'Jair?'" repeated Minnie; "isn't that the name of the woman in the Bible who drove a nail into some man's head?"

"You are thinking of Jael," replied her grandmamma, "who killed Sisera in this way. The meaning of Jayah is victory. In English our little one's name would have been Victoria, and you will see how she did obtain a victory.

"Your grandfather was walking one day on the esplanade, which is the smooth part of the beach at Bombay. A beautiful grove of cocoanut trees nearly covers it, and it is a delightful place to walk in. Very handsome bungalows belonging to Europeans are to be seen there in the dry season, but when the terrible monsoon begins to drive the ships about in the harbor and wreck those that are at sea, these pretty houses have to be moved away like so many tents, for very soon there is a deep sheet of water where they stood, and it is not safe to live near the beach while the rainy season lasts.

"So the bungalows are put away, like our summer clothes, for another year, but there are very fine houses farther back, within the fort, and many of them are several stories high, with verandahs and carved pillars at every story. At one end of the esplanade is what is called the black town, also a

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part of Bombay, but a very disagreeable part, for the streets are so narrow and crowded that it is fearfully hot and dusty.

"A great many Parsees live near the beach, for they love to worship on the shore at sunrise and sunset, when they often stand at the water's edge praying aloud in a strange language that some people say they do not understand themselves, while others lie down flat in the sand and rub their faces in it. Their temple, where the sacred fire is said to have been preserved through so many thousand years, is in the black town.

"Your grandfather during his walk heard a child's cry of distress, and hastening to that part of the grove from which it seemed to come, he found a beautiful little Parsee girl very richly dressed struggling in the grasp of a robber, who had torn off some of her ornaments, and was on the point of strangling her to stop her cries.

"When the gentleman appeared, the thief took to his heels, and your grandfather lifted up the little trembling creature in his arms and carried her to her parents. She had strayed some distance from the house, and if the missionary had not appeared when he did, it is probable that she never would have returned to it. The child told him

that her name was Jayah, and put her arms around his neck in the most confiding manner.

"Your grandfather talked to her of the school and the little girls who were taught there, and asked her if she would not like to come. She said, 'Yes, that she *would* come, for her father was a rich man and could do as he pleased.'

"Just as she said this her father and mother appeared, for they had gone out to look for her, and they were very much surprised to see their child in the arms of a stranger. When your grandfather told his story, they were very grateful to him, and Jayah had a great deal to say about the bad man who wanted to choke her.

"The missionary then spoke of the school, and the child begged that she might be allowed to go. The Parsees were rather frightened at this idea, but they did not wish to appear ungrateful, and finally they consented to place Jayah at the mission house for a while, on condition that she should not be taught to worship the God of the Christians.

"Your grandfather told them that their child would receive the same instruction as the other children, but that no direct means would be used to make her a Christian. With this they seemed

content, and little Jayah, to her great delight, was brought into the school.

"White Jessamine, who always loved to pet and protect anything weaker than herself, took the little stranger at once under her own wing, and so won her loving little heart by her kind and unselfish care that Jayah soon looked up to her as a superior being. More than this, White Jessamine talked to her constantly of the dear Lord Jesus whom she was learning to love, and the little Parsee listened in wondering awe.

"She would hold lovingly in her hand the gospels that she could not read, and drink in every word when White Jessamine told her the wondrous story that has saved so many sinners from despair.

"Jayah went with her friend when the children stole out of their little beds at night, and she never failed to say the little prayer that White Jessamine taught her.

"But some of the other pupils whose hearts were not in these things carried to the Parsee father and mother the report that Jayah was meeting with the Christians, that she worshiped their God and would soon be lost to her parents for ever. They were very angry, and threatened to take her from the school.

"The child cried herself sick when she heard of this, and said that she would not go away from her dear Padre and Madam Sahib and White Jessamine —she would *die* first.

"We tried to teach her that this was wrong, and that she must obey her parents if she would please the Lord Jesus.

"She looked up with a sweet smile, and said, 'I will do whatever he wants,' but we little thought that she would indeed die ere she left her adopted home.

"The very next day her parents came for her, but our little Victory lay upon her mat sick unto death. She was in great pain, for she had been seized with cholera, and her mother screamed and tore her hair when she saw her only child beyond the reach of human aid, while the father gazed mournfully on his little Jayah with great tears rolling down his cheeks.

"But the child was calm in all her sufferings. She lay perfectly still on her mat, and only said, when she saw her parents' distress, 'Do not mourn for me. I love the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am going to be with him always. I am not afraid. I want you to come too.'

"She did not speak again, and presently the

missionary offered a prayer to Him who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Little Jayah passed away before it was finished, and there was a smile upon her lips so beautiful that all who saw it felt that she had been rightly named."

"Grandmamma," said Minnie, with a very unsteady voice and something in her eyes that looked like tears, "did you not say that the wicked Parsees left their dead people to be eaten up by birds and animals?"

"This is their custom in disposing of their dead, my child, but our dear little Jayah received Christian burial. Her parents said that she belonged to us now, and they would not take her away. With many tears, White Jessamine arrayed the little form in a white robe, and a wreath of white flowers was placed upon her head. She was so lovely that we were loth to put her out of our sight, but in India it is so very hot that but little time can be allowed to gaze upon the dead, and feeling that the soul of this little lamb was in the bosom of the good Shepherd, and that she was safe from the troubles of this world, we laid her body in the ground to wait for the resurrection."

"I don't like their all dying, ma'am," said

Sarah as she wiped her eyes; "didn't any of the good ones live?"

"I have only told you of two that died," replied Mrs. Wildford, "Tulasi and Jayah, and you must remember that, had they lived, they would have suffered great persecution, and perhaps in the end have renounced their faith. Death is not an accident, Sarah: it comes to us all at one time or another; and oh what a blessing if it come when we are best prepared!"

Sarah had given very few serious thoughts to the subject, but after these words she could scarcely get it out of her mind.

"Any more stories, grandmamma?" said Minnie, wistfully.

Mrs. Wildford smiled.

"We had a blind girl named Ramkoor in the school," said she, presently, "and, blind as she was, she was one of our greatest comforts. She was not blind, though, when she came to us, and you will think it very sad when you hear how she became so."

"Tell us, please," said Minnie, who was still weeping over Jayah.

"Ramkoor was one of our oldest and finest girls; she was very intelligent, but quiet and reserved,

and I thought her almost cold, until I found that she had very deep feelings under that quiet manner. Her family were of very good caste, and her mother, who was violently opposed to Christianity, was extremely unwilling to have her come to the school; her father, however, had almost become a Christian, and he insisted on placing Ramkoor under our care.

"I found her, one day, with the tears rolling down her cheeks as she sat by herself reading the nineteenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, the beloved disciple's account of our Lord's suffering and death, and when I clasped her to my heart, she told me all her hopes and fears and struggles.

"'But my mother!' said she, amid her tears; 'how can I pacify her anger? She will want to kill me when she hears that I have joined the Christians.'

"I thought this so dreadful a thing to say of her own mother that I quite reproved her for it, but, alas! the poor child knew the unregenerate heathen nature better than I did.

"I took upon myself the task of telling Ramkoor's mother that her daughter wished to become a Christian, and I was surprised at the quiet manner in which it was received. 'She was willing,'

she said, 'if it made Ramkoor happy;' and encouraged by this, I even ventured to urge her to attend the Christian services herself.

"I did not quite understand the expression of her face as she thanked me and said that she would think about it, nor did I then know that some one had already told her that Ramkoor despised the religion of her family. She said that she would come and see her daughter and assure her of her consent, and I went home with a very much lightened heart.

"'My mother has become so kind,' said Ramkoor, running to me one day with a beaming face. 'She was in the compound for a few moments just now, and she brought me a present of sweetmeats, which she said I must share with no one, as she made them entirely for me. I do not like to eat them all myself, but my mother would not be denied in what she called her parting present.'

"I was very busy at the time, so we did not think much about it, but the next morning Ramkoor was taken violently ill, and your grandfather said at once that the symptoms were those of *poison*.

"A horrible suspicion came into my mind as I thought of the sweetmeats, and when your grand-

father had heard my story, he asked me to bring him what was left of the preserves. He analyzed them, and soon discovered that a powerful poison had been mixed with them. He sadly returned to his patient, and I feared from what he said that Ramkoor must die.

"He scarcely left her bedside for two days and nights, and at last God answered our prayers. Ramkoor's life was out of danger, but, alas! the poor child would never look upon this beautiful earth again: the dreadful poison had made her quite blind. It left her very timid and nervous for a long time, and she spent hours in weeping and despondency.

"It was a long time before Ramkoor could get reconciled to her loss of sight, but at length a bright, hopeful Christian spirit was given to her, and the blind girl became the sunbeam of our mission school. She learned to do many things for herself and others, and she said sweetly that as God willed it so she would be patient and wait until she got to heaven to see."

"And what did that wicked woman do," asked Sarah, "when she found that her daughter didn't die?"

"She killed herself by striking her head against

the stones," was the reply. "She said that she would not live under such disgrace as Ramkoor had brought upon her, and soon after this her husband came out boldly and openly as a Christian."

"Well," said Harry, "I'm glad she *did* kill herself, but she ought to have been hung."

"I wish she had lived," said Minnie, "and been a Christian too. Wouldn't that have been better, grandmamma?"

"Yes, my darling. But God permitted her to die this dreadful death with no hope in it, perhaps, as a warning to others. Unbridled anger is sure to lead us farther than we intend, and this is probably the cause of most of the murders that are committed."

When the children had left the room, Sarah lingered to speak to Mrs. Wildford. But she seemed to have some difficulty in *beginning* what she had to say. Her knitting-work, a very soft, pretty shawl of pure white, was quite completed, and she asked very timidly,

"Would this be of any use, ma'am, for the missionaries? I wanted to do something ever since Miss Minnie began to talk to me of what you said, though I believe I answered her short at

first, aud I thought I'd do something between-whiles, and perhaps you'd know of some lady that would like to buy it and have the money go to the missionaries."

"I *do* know of a lady who would like it very much," replied Mrs. Wildford. "Your work, Sarah, is beautiful, and I have wauted just such a shawl as this for some time. If you will fix a price upon it, I will become the purchaser."

But this Sarah could not be persuaded to do. It was not worth much, she said—anything that Mrs. Wildford chose to give. The lady finally named a price herself that seemed to the delighted girl almost excessive, but Mrs. Wildford assured her that it was only a fair valuation.

Sarah departed with a profusion of blushes and thanks, and Mrs. Wildford rejoiced over this unexpected fruit from her missiouary narratives.

CHAPTER XVI.

A STRANGE JOURNEY.

ARE you ready to go with me on a journey to the Mahableshwar hills to-night?" asked grandmamma as the party seated themselves in evident expectation.

"I am," replied Harry, "but I haven't the least idea where it is."

"What is that queer name, grandmamma?" asked Minnie—"Marble— Oh, I can't say it."

"Maha—blesh—war," repeated Mrs. Wildford; "the 'queer name' means 'Mighty God.' Do you remember my telling you how much water fell during the year at the Mahableshwar hills?"

"Three hundred inches!" shouted Harry.

"Yes," replied his grandmamma, "you are right, and therefore such a place would not do to live in during the rainy season. But these hills, which are a part of the Ghauts mountains, have so delightful a climate in the dry season that invalids frequently go there to be refreshed by the cool

breezes and pure air, and a worn-out missionary is quite made over by a few weeks' stay at Mahableshwar. When I was ordered there by the physician, I had two little ones to take with me—your mamma, then about a year old, and an older brother who died before we left India. Your grandfather could not go with us, but he had promised to meet us on our return for a visit to the caves of Elora, of which I will tell you when we come to them.

"I had been kindly invited to stay at the house of some English friends who lived at Mahableshwar during the dry season, and before we started in the bundur-boat that took us to the station on the continent, letters were written to engage men to meet us at the landing. From this place we were to be carried up to the mountain in a palanquin, and a set of bearers consisting of twelve men to carry the palanquin, and a mussal, or torch-bearer, who walks before and lights the way, were waiting for us."

"But, grandmamma," asked Harry, "does it take twelve men to carry one palanquin? I thought you said that four men could carry it."

"Four can carry it," was the reply, "but in going so great a distance six men carry it at a time, three at each pole, and it is necessary to have twelve men

to rest each other. When we landed at the wharf, we found the men waiting for us, and your dear grandfather, having established his wife and babies in the palanquin, charged the men to be very careful of such precious freight, and then took the boat back to Bombay."

"But weren't you frightened, grandmamma, to be left alone with all these queer men?"

"I believe I was, at first, Minnie, but I soon remembered that I had 'a sovereign Protector,' 'though unseen, yet for ever at hand.' The bearers, too, had good faces, and they were disposed to be very kind to Madam Sahib and the babahloke."

"Is that what they called the children?" asked Harry.

"Yes," was the reply, "and they gazed curiously at them as they were lifted into the palanquin, and said to each other, 'How white!' Then six of them took up the palanquin on their shoulders, while the others trudged along beside it, and the mussal lighted his torch and placed himself at the head of the procession."

"Why, grandmamma," said Minnie, in astonishment, "was it night when you went off in this funny way?"

"Yes, my little girl; night was considered the best time for the journey, because we did not have the hot sun then. We started at about five o'clock, and did not get to Mahableshwar until three in the morning. And now I want Harry to find the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew and read the parable of the ten virgins."

Wondering very much what this had to do with his grandmamma's journey, Harry did as he was told.

"You see there," said Mrs. Wildford, "that mention is made of taking oil in their vessels to feed their lamps. I have very little doubt, from this description, that the lamps in the parable were torches like the one that was carried before me in going to Mahableshwar. It was made of a long piece of wood with metal at the upper end, and cotton cloth wound about the metal. This cloth was dipped in cocoanut oil, and then lighted. When the light grew dim, fresh oil was poured on the cloth from the vessels. This was done a number of times during the journey."

"What did the vessels look like?" asked Harry.

"Very much like the oil-cans we use here," was the reply—"such as I have seen in the country for

kerosene oil. When the men took up the palanquin, they began a curious sort of grunt, while the others sang in cheery tones a sweet Hindoo melody."

"What did the men grunt for?" asked Minnie. "Was it because you and mamma and her little brother were so heavy?"

"No," replied her grandmother, with a smile; "I do not think that our weight troubled them at all: they were used to carrying palanquins with people in them. This grunting was a way they had. It seemed to help them on.

"I think," continued Mrs. Wildford, "that I never shall forget that night journey up the Ghauts mountains. Although so many years have passed, it seems to me now as fresh as if it had happened last summer. There was the magnificent scenery of the Ghauts, over which the moon poured down her soft, mellow light, and the moon and the stars seem much larger and brighter in India than they do here; the winding road that looked in some places narrow and dangerous enough; those wild, half-naked figures around me; the torch, with its scriptural associations; the strange singing in that foreign language that lulled me into a half sleep, from which I would start with the belief that I was

still dreaming, and through it all the cool, delicious breath of the night air that grew purer and sweeter as we ascended.

"I kept the palanquin open a great part of the time that I might not lose any view of the scenery, for probably I would not have another such opportunity in my lifetime. When we reached the foot of the mountains, there they were towering in huge masses of rock, in some places five thousand feet, above our heads, and as they appeared to stretch away in one unbroken chain, I could not see how we were ever to get up.

"When we came a little nearer, though, to this wall of stone, I could perceive a narrow opening, and my bearers seemed to know perfectly what they were about, for they made a sudden turn just at the right place, and a fresh four taking the palanquin, they began the ascent with sure feet, and never once slipped or stumbled. I talked with them from time to time, and found them always ready to answer pleasantly. Then I would fall asleep, to be awakened, perhaps, by the gurgling of a waterfall. Some of these cascades in the mountains glistened in the moonlight like veils of silver lace against the sombre background.

"So the night wore on. The children, heavy

with sleep, never woke nor stirred once. Up we wound along the narrow path to the very top of the mountain, and then I was awakened from a doze by the sudden setting down of the palanquin and an animated dispute among my attendants as to the situation of the house to which I was to be taken.

"I could not direct them, as I had never been there, and part of the men started off on a run to inquire at the nearest dwelling, while the others remained with me.

"'Now,' said I to this group, as I began to think that it was not pleasant to be standing quite still in so wild and lonely a spot, 'if a tiger should rush out upon us, you would run away and leave me and the children for him to make a meal of?'

"'Oh no,' they assured me; 'we would on no account leave the madam sahib and the babahloke. If they did such a thing as that, no one would employ them again.'"

"And *I* should think," said Harry, laughing at this idea, "that if they stayed to be eaten up by a tiger, no one would employ them again either."

"The same thought entered my mind," replied his grandmamma, "and I was not comforted by these professions half so much as I was by the

assurance that there were no tigers there and the knowledge that if there were our torch would frighten them away.

"At length the scouting-party returned with the report that the house we wanted was only about a quarter of a mile farther on. So with a fresh series of grunts the bearers took our palanquin up and started off again, and it seemed a very short time before we reached the pretty bungalow, where a bright light proclaimed that my friends were watching for me. The men were paid and dismissed, and I was soon resting with great satisfaction in a comfortable bed that I did leave until far into the next day.

"As soon as I could enjoy it I was taken to see a famous ravine which it made me quite dizzy to look at. It was about half a mile in length and nearly a quarter wide, but it was impossible to guess the depth. The rocky sides were almost perpendicular, and here and there a small ill-shaped tree had forced its way through a crevice in the rock. The bottom of the ravine was full of trees, but it was so deep that they looked like small bushes, and my friends were not willing to go within several yards of the edge of this dreadful precipice."

"There must have been lots of snakes and things at the bottom," said Harry.

"Any one who reached the bottom would not be much troubled by anything there," continued Mrs. Wildford, "as no life could possibly be left after that fall. I saw a number of apes with black faces during this drive, and they grinned at us as they sprang from branch to branch in a very ridiculous manner. The Hindoos consider them sacred, and one of their gods has the face of an ape.

"I spent five weeks with my kind friends in their mountain retreat, and they were weeks of constant enjoyment. The frequent drives and health-giving air did wonders for me, and I had not felt so well since my arrival in India as when your grandfather came to take me from Mahableshwar."

"Then you went somewhere else, didn't you, grandmamma?" asked Minnie.

"Yes," was the reply; "we went to Elora before we returned to Bombay, and having described Elephanta and Thanheri, I will try to give you some more wonderful caves. We had to make the journey there from Ahmednuggur on purpose, but both your grandfather and I needed the change, and we might not ever be so far on the way again.

We found plenty of poor creatures on the road to whom we spoke of the way of salvation, and in some cases with great encouragement. We had wished for a long time to meet with some Bheels, but they are only found among the mountains or in the villages near mountains."

"Are they like tigers?" asked Minnie.

"In some respects I am afraid they are," replied her grandmamma. "They are really human beings, but they are a caste by themselves, and their profession is that of robbers. They live in tribes, each one of which has its chief, and their dwellings are wretched huts that form little villages where few honest people ever venture to go. At night a party of them will sally forth into a town or village, while the inhabitants are sleeping, steal the cattle and whatever else they can lay their hands on, and be off again to the mountain or jungle before any one really knows what has been done.

"These Bheels are a very curious people, and it is thought they were the earliest inhabitants of India. They think so themselves, and they are in consequence very haughty and independent, caring neither for the Hindoos nor the Europeans. They are often employed as guides through dangerous places, for they can bear any amount of fatigue,

and they know all the mountain-paths and the trackless jungles so well that they never make a mistake. They do not consider it any disgrace to be robbers, and they make no secret of their occupation.

"The first Bheels whom we saw were sitting under a tree near a poor little village, armed with bows and arrows that looked very sharp and dangerous. The men wore very little clothing, and they were darker and stronger-looking than any of the other people we had seen in India.

"Your grandfather went up and spoke to them, and they answered him very civilly. They said that they were thieves, just as they might have said that they were farmers, and added that they were friends of the peishwar or governor of the nearest town. They are very apt to demand tribute or pay-money from travelers, but they said, with a smile, that they did not take any from the Padre Sahibs.

"'But I am very sorry that you take it at all,' replied the missionary; 'do you not know that it is wrong, as well as disgraceful, to steal?'

"They said that they did not think it could be wrong or they would not have been born in that caste. Why did God place them there where they

must steal if it was wrong to do so? It was their fate to be robbers, and therefore it was not wrong for them.

"They listened respectfully to all that your grandfather said, but I am afraid it made very little impression on them. This idea of fatality is one of the hardest things to overcome that the missionary finds in India. It is difficult to convince these poor people that man is really a free agent.

"We left the Bheels with sad hearts, and traveled on through dust and heat as fast as the warm Indian sun would let us. 'We,' in this case, means quite a party. I still had my palanquin and bearers, while your grandfather had his bullock-cart and godswallah. We had quite a journey before us, and Satara was the first place of any importance at which we stopped. Here we found Christian friends and a flourishing mission and school.

"Then we went on to Scroor, and I remember this part of the journey as being particularly hard. The roads were very rough, and the palanquin was shaken from side to side. Your mamma did not like it at all, and she cried so much that the bearers seemed quite troubled as to what was to be done with her."

"They would have thrown her into the river, I suppose?" said Harry.

"Scarcely that, I think, but they would have been better satisfied had we stopped to make an offering to one of the gods. We found Seroor quite a pleasant place, with some fine houses and gardens. These belong to the British officers, as it is an English military station, and we received from them a great deal of kind attention.

"From Seroor we went to Ahmednuggur, and here we spent two or three days. We had missionary friends here whom we had known in America, and they had kindly promised to take charge of the children while we visited Elora.

"Ahmednuggur is a strongly-fortified city, and its name means, fortress of Ahmed. It belonged, at one time, to the Mohammedans, and one of their rulers, Ahmed-Nizam-Shah, named it after himself. The Mahrattas took it from the Mohammedans, and in 1803 the English, under General Wellesley (afterward the duke of Wellington), took it from the Mahrattas. The fortress and the ditch around it, cost nine lacs of rupees, which is nearly five hundred thousand dollars.

"The town of Ahmednuggur is rather more than half a mile from the fort, and, like many other

Indian towns and villages, it has a natural wall of prickly pear, which grows over five yards high and is very thick and close. Both stem and leaf are full of long, sharp thorns, and when these are broken off, a liquid flows out that causes severe inflammation where the thorns scratch. So that you see a hedge of prickly pear is a strong protection against thieves or enemies of any kind. The goats do not seem to mind it, for we often saw them stretching up on their hind legs to get at the tenderest parts of the plants, which they succeeded in chewing in spite of the thorns and milk, but all the other animals keep at a respectful distance.

"The Emperor Arungzebe, the most famous of Indian rulers, died at Ahmednuggur in 1707. He had lived to be an old man of ninety. A mausoleum, or tomb, is shown where the emperor's heart is said to have been placed in an urn; this mausoleum has a tower at each end, and it is lighted up day and night, while perfumes are kept burning constantly. Twenty-four fakirs, or holy men, watch the lamps and pray for the soul of Arungzebe."

"Does that do him any good, grandmamma?" asked Harry.

"No, my dear child: prayers for the dead are useless; rather should our time and money be spent in doing good to the living. Arungzebe was a Mohammedan, and this, it seems, is one of their superstitions.

"After leaving the mansoleum, we went to the feroka-bagh—which means the emperor's garden—and this we found very beautiful. But the grounds had been neglected, and the place looked wild and desolate.

"We were taken all through the fortress, but I do not think a description of the guns and batteries and brass mortars would interest my audience; I will therefore only say that it is the strongest fortress in the Deccan, or table-land of India, and that very hard battles must have been fought before it could be taken from any party holding it.

"We also visited the ruins of a palace that must have been very grand in the days of its glory, and there are still fine paintings in a minaret, or Mohammedan chapel, that joins it.

"We saw many other things during our stay that were very interesting to us, not the least of which were the mission church and schools. Our missionary friends had given us a warm welcome, and they sent us on our way with many kind wishes. We

left Ahmednuggur with a very pleasant impression of the place and people.

"We then passed a number of forlorn villages, where the wretched inhabitants were very much oppressed by their rulers, and their poor little crops of rice were often seized by the wicked men who went about gathering the taxes. We often saw children gleaning in the rice-fields, and the little creatures would carefully pick up every scattered grain, for the rice had been so closely gathered that single grains dropped here and there were generally all that they could find.

"Sometimes patches of sugar-cane were seen, and cotton and indigo are also raised in India. Immense fields of poppies are found in some regions, very bright and beautiful in coloring, but the intoxicating drug, opium, is made from them, and having seen so much harm done by it, I always felt sorry to come upon a field of poppies.

"We had a very pleasant visit from a Brahmin at our first stopping-place. He was the most agreeable specimen of his class that we had yet seen. Very handsome and dignified, his manners were the perfection of courtesy and kindness, and he really seemed unhappy to find that he could do nothing for us.

"He spent a couple of hours talking with us and telling us of the wretched condition of his people under the native rulers. 'They would take,' he said, bitterly, 'a man's skin from off his back on the least shadow of an excuse, and the people would not cultivate the land beyond what was barely necessary to support their lives, because the peishwar's officers would seize everything they could raise. The British,' he added, 'were honest people, though they had conquered the country, and they always paid for what they got.'

"The poor Brahmin seemed to think this a very high order of merit indeed. He warned us against the Bheels, who, he said, were very numerous all the way that we must take to Elora. The people in authority, instead of punishing them, often used them against their enemies, and even received a regular tribute from the Bheels, who were in consequence allowed to rob as they pleased.

"This was dreadful indeed, and our poor bearers groaned at the very name of Bheel, but we told the Brahmin, to his great surprise, that we were not afraid of them.

"'Their arrows are poisoned,' said he, significantly.

"'I have a staunch weapon here," replied your

grandfather, drawing forth his Mahratta Bible, 'that I have never known to fail.'

"'Yes,' said the Brahmin as he turned over the leaves, 'I have sometimes seen your Shasters, and I know that they contain much that is good and true, but I do not think the Bheels would listen.'

"'Will you listen?' asked the missionary, and, like Philip with the eunuch, 'he opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus.'

"'It is very beautiful, all that you say,' replied the Brahmin, 'but I should not like to leave the religion of my fathers. It is not what it used to be, though,' he added, sadly, 'for many of the Brahmins forget their high calling and only think of what they can get from the people. I have seen them about here even making fires in the temples to cook their food, and they will eat and sleep, sleep and eat, until they are scarcely better than beasts.'

"His fine countenance was overcast with sorrow, for he felt it as deeply as we should feel any irreverence in our Christian temples, and we spared no efforts in that short time to show him the better way. He took the Bible and other books that

your grandfather offered him with apparent gratitude, and promised to study them carefully.

"Our Brahmin friend sent his servant the next morning to accompany us out of the village, and on parting with him we asked if there was anything we could do for him. His face brightened as he gave us to understand that he would be perfectly happy if we could give him some medicine."

"Was he sick?" asked Harry.

"He did not appear to be," was the reply, "but he seemed to have a passion for Epsom salts and blue pills."

"Oh," said Minnie, with a most expressive face, "I wish he could have taken mine for me when I was sick! Did he like castor oil too?"

"Nothing came amiss, I believe, in the shape of drugs. I think I have told you that the Hindoos have an unbounded confidence in European remedies, and they look upon those of the Americans in the same light. We were glad that we were able to gratify the man, and having supplied his wants from a portable chest that always accompanied us in our travels, we received his parting salaam and went on our way to Yoka.

"This was more than a day's journey from our last stopping-place, and when we reached the sta-

tion where we were to spend the night, we found that it bore a very bad character for safety. There were Bheels all around, and we were told that several murders had lately been committed by them.

"'There!' exclaimed our men, suddenly depositing me with the palanquin on the ground; 'what are we to do now? Do you see that band of Neshoda over there?'

"'Neshoda' is another name for robbers; it means a horrid or bad action.

"We certainly did see them, and they were not at all a pleasant-looking party. There must have been fifty of them, fully armed, and with such wild, fierce faces that I shuddered as I peeped at them from my palanquin. Truly thankful did I feel that the babahloke were safe at Ahmednuggur.

"Your grandfather got out of the bullock cart, and as the godswallah did not seem disposed to run away, he ordered him to remain where he was, and the bearers all loudly declared their readiness to protect Madam Sahib. They could not very well get away from the Bheels now, and they concluded to make the best of it.

"'But oh, Padre Sahib,' they entreated as they saw the missionary advancing toward the robbers,

Bible in hand, 'do not try to talk to these dreadful fellows! They will hang you up by the heels, and your servants all in a row.'

"They broke forth into a series of howls at the prospect, but your grandfather, after whispering a few words of comfort to me, went steadily on.

"He found the robbers gathered around their chief, who was lounging under a tree directly in the way that we should have to pass.

"'I have a message for you,' said the missionary to the chief; 'are you willing to hear it?'

"The robber stared at him in surprise, while his men only waited for their ruler's orders to make an attack on the stranger. This was so different from the usual conduct of travelers, who always fled in terror at the sight of Bheels, that the chief felt curious to know what his visitor had to say. Your grandfather stood there under the tree, and read such portions of God's word as he thought best suited to his audience, and no one interrupted him or even stirred during the reading. The chief even told him to go on when he paused to see how his hearers were taking it. He heard an occasional murmur as to the beauty of the Bible narratives, but when he had finished reading, the hardest part of his task was before him; he must apply those

divine precepts to the lives of these wicked men and reason with them on their sins.

"He spoke with the boldness and zeal of an apostle, and he was listened to respectfully.

"'That is all very good for Europeans,' replied the Bheel, 'but it will not do for us. We were born in this caste; our fathers and grandfathers were robbers before us, and so will our children and grandchildren be after us. You are a good man, and we will not harm you, but who are all these people with you?'

"The missionary explained that they were his wife and servants, and the robber said that all should be safe for the time of their stay.

"The dhak men (our bearers) prostrated themselves before the Padre Sahib, as though he had been a being of another sphere, when they heard of his success, and from that time forth their veneration for him was very much increased.

"Our lodgings, that night, in the traveler's rest, were not very comfortable, but we felt that they were safe, for when these robbers once give a promise, they can be implicitly trusted.

"The chief had sent two of his band to keep guard over us on the outside of the building, and your grandfather, not knowing this, stole out quietly

soon after midnight to see if he could find some cool air. As he walked around to the other side of the house he was suddenly seized by a Bheel, who cried out:

"'What business have you here?'

"Your grandfather tried to explain matters, and there was such a noise that the dhak men sleeping on the verandah were awakened, and they succeeded in making the Bheel understand that he had made quite a mistake.

"He fell down on the ground and begged your grandfather to put his foot on his neck and kill him. He would not get up until the Padre Sahib fairly ran away into the house, and then it took the other Bheel quite a long time to pacify him."

"Why, they were first-rate fellows, after all, grandmamma," said Harry, "except their being thieves."

"This was a slight flaw in their character," replied his grandmamma. "Poor fellows! it really seemed as though they were capable of better things. The missionary became a great favorite with them, for the next morning before we started on our journey a Bheel was brought in by his companions suffering greatly from a gunshot wound in his arm. Your grandfather succeeded in extract-

ing the shot, and dressed the wound, so that the man felt comparatively comfortable. He was very grateful, and professed his readiness to do anything for the kind Padre Sahib. The missionary did not lose this opportunity of speaking of the great Physician of souls, and it may be that the poor benighted mind retained some of the truths thus for the first time presented.

"The robbers seemed almost sorry to part with us, and I was very much amused at their doubtful compliment. One of the band was sent to protect us on our journey and during our stay at Elora from the attacks of other Bheels, and when we considered his character and calling, he seemed a very comical sort of protector.

"The dhak men, however, assured us that we were in luck: a Bheel for a guide was equal to a certificate of our safe arrival; and they trudged cheerfully on with me and the palanquin, while the Bheel kept up with the bullock cart. A walk of a hundred or even two hundred miles through a thick jungle is nothing to these men; they seem to be proof against all sorts of fatigue.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE CAVES OF ELORA.

WE spent the next night at Toka, which we found a very nice, clean little town situated on the Godavery River. There we took up our quarters in a fine large house for the accommodation of travelers. It had plenty of covered verandahs, and we were more comfortable than we had been at any place during our journey.

"There is a very handsome stone pagoda at Toka, and a long flight of stone steps leading down to the river.

"The next morning I did not feel well enough to travel, and we were obliged to wait for another day. Having made me as comfortable as possible, your grandfather went out with the Bheel to explore the place, and he came very near having an adventure with a tiger."

"Oh," said Harry, in great excitement, "please tell us all about it, grandmamma."

"I will tell the tale as it was told to me," replied Mrs. Wildford, "but do not expect too much

or you will be disappointed. When the missionary and his guide got to the end of the town, they found a crowd of people gathered there, and in answer to their inquiries they were told that there was a tiger in a field not far off. The Bheel said that he was not afraid to go to him and shoot him, and having borrowed a gun from a man, he went to attack the tiger."

"I should not think any one would have wanted to lend a gun to a thief," said Minnie.

"They were probably glad to have a tiger killed on any terms," was the reply. "When they came to the field, sure enough, there was a tiger walking across the end of it, and people, women and all, were climbing up into the trees to look at him. They seemed very glad to see the Bheel and his gun, for no one had dared to attack the dangerous animal.

"The robber got over the wall that fenced off the field from the road, and began to walk toward the tiger. The people were all very much excited now, and watched for the spring that the animal would be sure to make when he saw the Bheel. The man stood still and looked at him for a few moments, flourishing his gun before him, and then walked on. It seemed very daring to go so near

the tiger, and every one wondered that the animal did not attack him.

"Presently the man passed so close to the tiger that he almost brushed against him, but still nothing came of it. The tiger seemed to be thinking of his own affairs, and in a few moments the Bheel came back to your grandfather laughing. He had discovered that the dangerous animal was stone-blind, and he was, moreover, perfectly tame!

"He had strayed off from a neighboring compound, and his owner soon appeared in quest of him. We learned that he was quite a pet in the family, having been captured when very young."

"I am glad that Wag isn't a tiger," said Minnie as she patted his shaggy back. "I should be afraid of him, even if he was blind."

"Our next day's journey," continued Mrs. Wildford, "was to Shahpoor, which means Place of Kings, but it was the last place in which we would have expected to find such gentlemen. About thirty forlorn little huts composed the town, and the inhabitants came forth to beg of us, suffering from leprosy and other dreadful diseases, and with scarcely any clothing to cover their nakedness.

"We had to cross the Godavery River in a

clumsy boat, and landed in a thick jungle. In going through this we met parties of Bheels continually. Our robber-guide, however, seemed to give us an air of respectability in their eyes, for none of them offered to molest us, but we were not at all sorry to get out of the jungle, which appeared to afford them a favorite residence.

"The country was quite hilly now, and we found that we were approaching the wonderful mountain that used to be so much frequented as a shrine by faithful Hindoos. Not far from Elora we passed a Mussulman village that had a strong stone wall around it and a number of cultivated fields. A guard of Arabs were stationed at the gateway, and their flowing robes and dignified bearing had quite a picturesque effect.

"Near Elora the road is very pleasantly shaded by trees, and the pretty little village itself is quite buried in them. It is considered a very holy place, and the inhabitants are mostly of the Brahmin caste.

"The mountain, with its wonderful temples, is about a mile from the village, and before going on we stopped to rest in a handsome pagoda. It was beautifully situated, and close by was the finest tank we had seen in India. There was a great

deal of work on it, the stone was so beautifully cut and carved, and the color was of a cheerful blue-gray.

"Now," continued Mrs. Wildford, "in order to get some idea of the wonders I am about to describe to you, you must try to imagine what it would be to take a solid mountain, as the sculptor does a block of marble, and hew it into temples and figures, for this is just what has been done with Elora.

"As we approached the place we were struck with the stillness all about it; not a human being was visible, and there seemed to be no sound nor sign of life. The scenery is most beautiful and romantic, and those wonderful caves and temples are the monuments of a people whose very nation and age are unknown.

"There are about a dozen temples altogether that extend over a mile along the mountains, and the largest and finest of these is called Keylas, or Paradise. An immense square is cut in the top of the mountain by making a steep valley all around two hundred and fifty feet deep and one hundred and fifty feet wide; above this valley the temple rises to the height of nearly one hundred feet. It appears to be supported by twenty-four gigantic

stone elephants, twelve of which are turned to the north and twelve to the south.

"There are three verandahs, or galleries, on the outside, with stone pillars and immense figures of Hindoo gods. The gateway is very handsome, with small apartments about it, and immediately over the gate is a balcony. On the front of the temple are various sculptured figures and ornaments; a goddess named Bhoovani on the right, and Gunputti on the left. Bhoovani sits on a lotus and two elephants with their trunks twisted together.

"Near these figures are two large obelisks, or pillars, beautifully carved, and said to be larger than Cleopatra's Needle in Egypt. These obelisks by themselves would be a great curiosity, but at Elora they merely ornament the front of the temple.

"Entering the gateway, we came upon several suites of apartments on each side full of sculptured figures of all the animals and gods and goddesses that Hindoo superstition could possibly imagine. The monkey god Hanuman is often seen here, and there is a colossal figure of another god with ten hands.

"Then we went up by four steps to a large hall

and smaller temples within the larger ones; they are connected by small ledges or bridges of rock. After examining these we went up a much longer flight of stairs to the portico; on the top of this portico are the remains of a lion, and inside two figures of sphinxes.

"By three steps from the portico we went into a small room where a figure of the bull god Nundi is placed. There are passages of rock between some of the rooms up stairs, from which we had a fine view of the country and the village of Elora.

"Going back to the portico, which is open and supported by pillars, we looked down upon the front of the temple below us, and were lost in wonder at its grand proportions. We found a stone bench here, on which we sat for some time gazing at the lonely grandeur by which we were surrounded.

"After a while we were sufficiently rested to mount the four steps that lead to the great hall. On reaching the entrance of this magnificent apartment, we stood and gazed in silent wonder.

"Massive pillars beautifully sculptured are placed at equal distances through the entire length, reaching from the smooth floor of solid rock to the roof of the same material. This

granite is all so finely polished that it is difficult to recognize the familiar stone when wrought into such forms of exquisite workmanship.

"At the entrance to this hall are two huge figures called Chubdars, which means, 'keepers of silence;' they are usually placed with a club, or chouree, in their hands, in state-apartments, to enforce order and quiet. Only stone ones would be needed at Elora, where the silence may be almost felt. The depth of the hall is over one hundred feet, and there are balconies at the end of it, with stone benches like that in the portico. Several of the principal figures of Hindoo mythology are sculptured here, and figures of sphinxes are carved like those we see in pictures of Egypt.

"There are immense galleries leading from temple to temple and from one suite of apartments to another; these galleries are all supported by pillars, some of which are round, some square and others eight sided.

"We spent two full days in examining all these wonders, and we felt then that time enough had not been given to them. We lodged, meanwhile, in the pagoda, and as we took our provisions with us, we managed to get along quite comfortably. Our Bheel guide and protector was a great con-

venience, but it was quite evident that he did not appreciate our enthusiasm about Elora, and when asked what he thought of the great hall, he remarked that 'it would be a good place to sleep in.'

"The temple that I have been describing is the largest of the group, but we also visited a number of others called Des Avatar, Teen Tal, Do Tal, Visvacarma, Jugnaut, Indra, Jaunwassee, Nilacanthu, Rama Warra, and I do not know how many more."

"Oh, grandmamma," said Minnie, who had been very quiet for some time, "how can you remember so many of these dreadful names?"

"I could not, I suppose," replied Mrs. Wildford, "if most of them were not the names of Hindoo gods that are very familiar to me. I cannot tell you much of these other temples, but I will try to give you some little idea of them. Teen Tal is a very beautiful temple of three stories with regular flights of stairs as in a large dwelling-house. Like Keylas, it has grand pillars and finely-shaped figures, with galleries, halls and endless sets of rooms.

"The temple of Visvacarma is quite different from the others in having an arched roof, while the altar at the farther end is a large mass of rock

in the form of a half globe. An even row of eight-sided pillars extends the entire length of the temple on each side, and a sitting figure is sculptured at the top of each pillar.

"The temple of Indra, also a magnificent building, is in honor of a god from whom the name of India is said to be derived."

"Does no one know who built these temples, either?" asked Harry. "They weren't always there, were they, grandmamma?"

"Their origin is quite unknown," replied his grandmother. "The Hindoos have, of course, a foolish story about them, something like this:

"THE LEGEND OF ELORA.

"A follower of Brahma, who was a very holy man, had a son named Conroo and a brother who was called Pandoo. These two men were to govern the world, but they disputed about their respective powers.

"They were told to settle the matter by a game of chance, and Conroo won. Pandoo then resolved to seek some quiet place away from the world to hide himself in, and taking his wife, he started on a journey and came at last to Elora.

"After a while he had five sons, and when they were grown, they began to dig caverns to please the god Krishna, and they prayed to the god to grant them a night that would last a whole year, that it might be said that these wonderful caves in which they were building temples were done in a night.

"When all the temples were finished, day dawned again, and the brothers were sent in different directions to tell people of the miracle. Multitudes flocked to Elora to gaze upon the work and see the family of Pandoo.

"The father was soon taken to a better world on account of his piety, and the five brothers reigned supreme over a great part of the world below. All who opposed them found it useless, for they were aided by Krishna, because they had performed such holy works in his honor."

"That's just like a fairy tale," said Minnie.

"Yes, grandmamma," said Harry; "it sounds like 'Jack's Beanstalk.'"

"It is only a sample of the childish stories that are told of the Hindoo gods," continued Mrs. Wildford, "and we could not help thinking, as we gazed upon these noble works of art, that they de-

served a better history than this. Frequent pilgrimages are made to the temples of Elora, and we often met people who had come a long distance to pay puja to some favorite idol considered doubly sacred here. Brahmins sometimes take up their residence in a verandah, or gallery, and in one spot we even saw clothes hanging out to dry, which looked very much like the presence of a family near.

"We had spent two days in constant sight-seeing, and although sorry to leave a place of so much interest, which, in all human probability, I should never see again, I scarcely felt able to do anything but rest after the unwonted fatigue.

"We traveled slowly, with our Bheel guide and my palanquin and dhak, as before, meeting with pilgrims and devotees for several miles after we left Elora. From these people we heard so much of the fortress of Dowlutabad, of which we had had a distant glimpse on the way, that we did not feel willing to leave that part of India without paying it a flying visit. It was about fourteen miles out of our way, but this did not seem much when we had already traveled so far.

"So we went to Dowlutabad, and we felt quite repaid for our trouble. It was the most remark-

able-looking fortress we had ever seen, and this engraving is a very good representation of it."

"It stood out boldly and grandly, a huge rock with very steep sides, for some distance, and then it rose in a series of terraces to the very top, that was crowned by a handsome building occupied by the killahdor, or governor."

The children could fully appreciate the beauty of the picture, and Sarah's admiration was unbounded.

"You will see," continued Mrs. Wildford, "that there is a very strong wall around the fort and an outer one around the town. There is a secret passage, which you do not see, that is hewn out of the very heart of the mountain and winds up to the top of the hill. There are trap-doors in this passage, and flights of steps lead from them to the outer ditch. These are to be used by those in the fortress if enemies should get into the passage.

"The fortress of Dowlutabad has changed owners several times, and Ahmed-Shah-Nizam, who gave his name to Ahmednuggur, took it in 1633. But it has been for some years past in possession of a native ruler.

"And now, my dear children, grandmamma has really talked herself out of breath for to-day; I

wonder how much you will remember of what I have told you?"

"I remember ever so much," said Minnie, brightly; "I liked to hear about these caves, grandmamma."

"The fortress was jolly," said Harry.

"I did not find it at all so," replied his grandmamma, smiling; "it looked very frowning indeed."

"Oh, well, you know what I mean, grandmamma; I suppose that Minnie would call it nice. Some day I am going to read about those caves in a great book that papa has in the library."

Grandmamma thought this a very good plan indeed, and the little party soon dispersed with many expressions of gratitude.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HEAVENLY INHERITANCE.

"GAVE we almost used India up, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, quite sadly, when they were gathered around Mrs. Wildford the next evening.

"I cannot promise you a great deal more," was the reply, "but since my narratives have interested you in the subject, I shall hope that you will read the missionary reports for yourselves and see what a great work is going on. But there are some other reports that I should like to hear before I begin. How about the radish crop, and the pocket-handkerchiefs, and doing without sweet things, and all the grand plans that my little friends proposed?"

Two banks were speedily opened. Harry produced a dollar from his radish-bed, and reported his second crop as in the ground, with two more dollars, the fruit of self-denial, while Minnie had earned fifty cents by sewing, and modestly produced

three dollars which her mother had given her as an equivalent for cake, preserves and other dainties.

"Well done!" said grandmamma, kissing both eager faces. "I call this a very good beginning indeed. I have, besides, Harry's five dollars (Harry looked rather sheepish at this), and with Sarah's five—"

"Why, Sarah!" interrupted Minnie in astonishment. "Did you really give five dollars to the missionaries? You told me that you wouldn't give anything?"

Sarah was in dire confusion.

"It was really your grandmamma's giving, Miss Minnie: I only knitted a shawl for it; but I'm sure I didn't say I wouldn't give anything to the missionaries."

"Sarah gave her time," said Mrs. Wildford, kindly—"the little time that she could really call her own—and as she happened to make just the thing I wanted, in the nicest possible way, I gladly bought it for the missionary cause."

"Oh, Sarah," whispered Minnie, with her arms around her neck, "I called you mean and hateful,' and I don't know what all, and all the time you were so good."

"Well, Miss Minnie," was the laughing reply,

"you know I'm used to having you scold me, and I'd really rather you'd do that than to call me 'good,' for I'm not good at all."

"It is a great deal, my child, to know that," said Mrs. Wildford, encouragingly. "If God has shown you yourself, pray that he will yet show you himself: none who truly come to him are ever cast out. I think I will tell you this evening a story of the heavenly inheritance, which I hope we shall all strive for and obtain. This happened on our homeward journey, and it seemed to us a strange parallel to the case of the man who said to our Lord, 'Speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.'

"We returned to Ahmednuggur, where we had left the children, and our Bheel guide left us at the village where he had joined us. Our friends at Ahmednuggur insisted upon keeping us with them for two or three days, to get up our strength after the fatigue of so much sight-seeing, and the day after our arrival there a Hindoo came into the compound and said that he wished to see Padre Sahib B——.

"This was the clergyman at whose house we were staying, and when Mr. B—— went out to him, the man told him that he had come to ask his

adviee. He had a lawsuit then in the eourt against his brother, who had not been willing to divide their father's estate with him, and he wished to know how it was best for him to proeeed.

"Families in India are in the habit of living together; all the sons bring their wives home, and additions are built to the house as the family increases. They have everything in eommon, and live in this way until some quarrel takes plaee. This had probably been the ease with the man who eame to Mr. B——, and leaving his father's house, he naturally wished to take with him his share of the property. He belonged to one of the lower eastes; and his father, he said, had been dead for some time.

"The missionary did not answer his question, but began talking to him of the heavenly inheritanee.

"'There is a pieee of property,' said he, 'a great deal more valuable than any your father left, and you may have it for the asking. Get that, and you are rieh for eternity, but this world and the fashion of it pass away.'

"The man was, at first, simply astonished that the Padre Sahib should reply to him in sueh a way as this, but he soon beeame interested in what he said, and listened eagerly to every word.

"'I'll do it!' said he, 'I'll get it!' and he rushed suddenly out of the compound, and went off at a quick pace.

"The next day the Hindoo came again and asked for Mr. B——.

"'I've done it!' said he, with great satisfaction.

"'What have you done?' asked the missionary.

"'Why, I have taken my case out of court.'

"'But I did not tell you to do that,' remonstrated Mr. B——, who feared that trouble might ensue to the missionaries if they were charged with meddling in such affairs.

"'I do not care for it any longer,' was the reply; 'my brother may keep all the property now. I want to hear more about the inheritance you told me of yesterday. I want to know how I can get possession of it.'

"Mr. B—— took the earnest inquirer into his study, and pointed him faithfully to the heavenly home where his inheritance was ready for him, to the loving Elder Brother who had redeemed it for him, and to the Father who waited to bestow it.

"Your grandfather also talked with the man, and he was very much moved by his earnestness, and his literal way of receiving these heavenly truths. He really seemed to hunger and thirst

after righteousness, and the one idea with which he had first come to the missionary appeared to have been put entirely out of his head.

"We felt so much interested in this new disciple that Mr. B—— promised to write to us of his progress; and we soon heard that he had given up everything and had been received into the mission-house. There was no doubting his perfect sincerity, and in his case none could forbid water that he should be baptized.

"Meanwhile, his brother was very much puzzled at his proceedings—first, in withdrawing the case when so much was at stake, and then in leaving all that he had hitherto cared for, to go to the missionaries. He resolved to talk with him, and he presented himself in the compound and asked for Sivaji.

"This was the converted brother, and he listened dreamily while the other began to speak of the inheritance, and to assure him that he did not want it all, only his share of it.

"'But I do not want any,' replied Sivaji; 'I have something better than that trash, which is not worth dividing.'

"'Have you found hidden treasure, then?' asked his brother in surprise.

"'Yes,' was the reply; 'I have found the pearl of great price; and I am not going to give it up for a paltry rice-field or two, that I cannot take with me when I die.'

"'I know what you mean now,' said the brother; 'you are a Christian.'

"'I am, and as a Christian I care nothing for the things that once seemed to me so large. Keep the inheritance, brother, for I have a much greater one in heaven. You too may have one if you will pay the price for it.'

"'Tell me of it,' said the other.

"Sivaji and his brother seated themselves on a wooden bench under some mango trees, and teacher and scholar were both so earnest that they did not see Mr. B——, who had come behind them and listened with tears in his eyes to Sivaji's simple account of his conversion, and the peace and joy he found in believing.

"'I must think of this,' replied his brother as he turned to leave and made his salaam to the Padre Sahib. 'I want this inheritance too, and as Sivaji has given up all that he had for it, and is not sorry, but rather glad, there must be something in it.'

"'There is everything in it,' said Mr. B——;

"'life eternal and all things else that God sees fit to add.'

"He gave the man a copy of one of the Gospels, and bade him read it carefully and pray for a teachable spirit.

"It was not long before Sivaji's brother joined him at the mission-house, and then only one brother was left with the earthly inheritance all to himself.

"He was a very bigoted Hindoo, and had always a heathen argument ready for any Christian who ventured to approach him. One day Mr. B—— met him in quite a public place, and the man, who thought this a good opportunity to show his cleverness, called out loudly,

"'See here, Padre Sahib, I am ready to turn Christian just so soon as you can convince me that Christianity is older than the Hindoo religion.'

"The missionary turned around with a smile, and pointing to the ragged and uncleanly garment that could not be said to cover its owner, he replied: 'And I, my friend, am willing to put on a ragged shirt just so soon as you can convince me that an old garment is better than a new one.'

"The Hindoo glanced from his tattered robe to the spotless linen of the Padre, while the crowd around them laughed at his discomfiture. He was

sparing of his rupees, and made his garments last longer than his neighbors'. They were quite willing, therefore, that the Padre Sahib should have the advantage of him.

"That old shirt in time did its work, and the family of brothers, who had begun by quarreling over an earthly inheritance, were reunited in seeking a heavenly one."

"That is a very nice story, ma'am," said Sarah, really meaning a great deal more than she said.

Harry was looking quite serious, and wishing that the heavenly inheritance could seem more real to him, while Minnie was sorrowfully reflecting that this was probably the last story about India.

CHAPTER XIX.

PAST AND PRESENT.

"YOU must think of something more, grandmamma," said Harry, the next evening; "you didn't really make an end of India, did you?"

"Not quite," replied his grandmamma, smiling at all the inquiring faces, "but as I think you would scarcely be satisfied unless I went regularly through my whole experience as a missionary, and I am not quite equal to that, I shall have to make this the last of our regular 'talks' for the present. Do not look so miserable, Minnie; there will be plenty to say on India at different times; it is only this regular course of lectures that I propose to abandon."

"Mamma says that we have worn you out, this winter," said Minnie regretfully as she gazed at her grandmamma, "but I am sure we didn't mean to, and it has been so nice to come in here."

"It has been jolly," said Harry, warmly; "but

I forgot—grandmamma does not like that word. Papa says he means to have a statue made of you as Patience, with us all sitting around you, and my missionary hen in the background. It's a shame that I never got that hen, isn't it, grandmamma?"

"I am not at all 'worn out,'" said Mrs. Wildford in reply, "and I am quite sure that I shall not sit for a statue of Patience. What remains now of my recollections of India is so sad that I can scarcely trust myself to go through those scenes. I spent seven years there with your dear grandfather—happy, useful years, in spite of toil and care and hardships; and when I left there it was with my little fatherless child, the only one left me of a band of four. The fierce Indian sun, to which he had been exposed for hours, struck your grandfather down as he was preaching to some men just outside of a pagoda, and he was carried into a heathen temple to die.

"He went out from me in health, and was brought home breathless; but his last words, 'For Christ's sake,' came to me as a sweet fragrance from his early tomb. It was a sorrowful school and mission when the news spread that their beloved Padre Sahib would walk among them no more; and the gentle care and tenderness of those Hindoo

men and women and children for me and my little one were more eloquent than words could have been.

"I meant to labor on alone and train my child in the land of her birth to follow in her father's footsteps, but I soon broke down under the double burden, and was told that only a life of useless invalidism was before me in that exhausting climate. Not without many tears and struggles could I bring myself to leave the work I had chosen for life, and tears and prayers followed me to the ship from those whose conversion had been the fruit of our labors in India.

"When I think of India then and now," continued Mrs. Wildford, "it is very difficult to believe that such a wonderful change has taken place. What those who sowed in those early days sowed in tears, later laborers reap with joy. The work is so much easier in every way than it was; missionaries are better equipped and better supported than they were, and they know better how to protect themselves against the climate. The high-caste women, too, have been reached in those dreary zenanas, and where the gospel once penetrates sin and darkness can no longer find a cover from the light. One of our religious papers said, lately,

that heathenism in India is now only an upper crust, soon to be broken by the seething and upheaving of the mass below. The soil has been watered with tears and prayers and precious lives, and God is giving the increase."

"Is that a letter, grandmamma?" asked Minnie, with great interest, "and are you going to read it to us?"

"It is a letter," was the reply, "and it is from some one whose story you liked very much indeed. Now can you guess who?"

"Not White Jessamine?" ventured Minnie, in a state of incredulous rapture.

"Yes, it is!" shouted Harry; "I know by grandmamma's face. I wonder if White Jessamine spells any better than I do?"

"You may look and see when I have finished reading the letter," said his grandmamma; "my old pupil writes to me once in six months, and keeps me informed of all the changes that take place in the mission. I shall not read her letter regularly through, only parts of it here and there. She begins:

"'My dear Mamma Sahib—for you must let me call you so still, although so many years have passed since the troublesome little Hindoo girl first

gave you this name—I wish that you were here, only in spirit, though, for much as I would love to see you again, you must not come to this land to die. It seems to me that, as the years roll on, I feel more and more what I owe you, my kindest earthly friend, for what you have done for me. My children, in their daily faults and mischievous pranks, bring before me my own childhood and the trouble I must have caused you and the dear Padre Sahib. Especially does your little namesake, now just about the age at which you took me under your fostering care, and a perfect little lump of mischief, remind me of my own freaks and impatience of control. She does me good, I think, for I have to be patient with her, remembering what I was myself. Only yesterday this small damsel parted her hair on one side, dressed herself in a suit of her brother's clothes and declared her resolution of being a boy.'"

"Oh, don't you remember, grandmamma?" said Minnie, laughing; "I suppose White Jessamine thought of the time when she put on grandpapa's clothes."

"She probably did, my dear; it is very amusing that she should have such a funny little edition of herself to deal with. She continues:

"'When I look at my husband, born in the haughty Brahmin caste and married to the daughter of a rice-gatherer, I can scarcely believe, sometimes, that I am not dreaming. Truly has Christianity made confusion with all the honored Hindoo prejudices! It would do your heart good to see them cast aside.

"'We work hard, but we love our work, and there is so much of it, because the harvest is so plentiful. There are not enough laborers, and I do not believe that there ever will be, but all our children have been given to the service of the Lord, as the pious Hannah gave Samuel of old, and when we are called away, they must take up our work where we lay it down.

"'On Christmas day we were at the English chapel, and oh what a sight gladdened our eyes! A crowd of converted Hindoo women, dressed in pure white, knelt there in reverent worship of Him who had called them out of darkness into his marvelous light, and as we gazed upon them with glad tears in our eyes, we thought of the great multitude whom no man could number, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.'"

"Isn't that lovely?" said Minnie; "did White Jessamine really write all that?"

"Yes," replied Mrs. Wildford, "and she has written a great deal more, as you may see by all these sheets of paper. I prize her letters very highly; and now, Master Harry, you may criticise her spelling."

"Well," said Harry, after glancing over the neat pages, "I guess she knows how to spell, but I don't see how people ever can remember about the two l's and n's."

"Oh my!" said Sarah, in an admiring whisper; "what beautiful writing, to be sure!"

Mrs. Bolton declared that it was like copper-plate engraving, and her mother continued, as she glanced lovingly over the letter,

"I was always rather proud, I think, of White Jessamine's writing, for I taught her myself. It is pretty good for a Hindoo woman."

"Grandmamma," said Harry, suddenly, "I really wish that a bad boy could be of some use in the world."

"The very best thing that such members of society can do," was the reply, "is to become good boys as soon as possible. And yet, Harry," continued his grandmamma, "India owes a great deal

at this day to one who was a very bad boy, and who, certainly, could not be called a good man."

This promised to be exciting, and Harry asked, with interest, "Another story, grandmamma?"

"Not much of a story," said Mrs. Wildford, "but I wish to tell you a little of Lord Clive, through whose talents, energy and indomitable courage the power of the British in India was so firmly established, and through this power the way opened for Christian missionaries to carry the light of the gospel to that dark land of the East.

"Lord Clive was born in Shropshire, England, in 1725, and as a boy he was so remarkably bad and troublesome that he was a constant torment to his family, and they had but one feeling respecting him, which was to get rid of him as soon as possible. He had a very fierce temper, and was for ever in street fights, but in school he was looked upon as little better than a dunce.

"Nothing was expected of this hopeless boy but disgrace and trouble, and when an opportunity offered to send him to India, which in those days was like sending him to another world, it was thought to be a most fortunate thing. No one ever expected to see him again, and owing to his conduct, they had very little desire to do so.

"Clive was only about eighteen years old when he left England as a clerk in the service of the East India Company, and he was over a year in getting to Madras, in Southern India. During a war with the French, and afterward with the natives, our young Englishman entered the army, and by his courage and presence of mind he gained one victory after another. The siege of Arcot and the battle of Plassey are the most famous of these victories. Clive also subdued the native rulers, dethroning one and setting up another as he saw fit. He was accused of cruelty and love of gain, and he does not seem to have been quite free from those charges, but the bad boy had grown to be a much better man than could have been expected, and like most successful men, he had many rivals and enemies who lost no opportunity of injuring him. He governed India firmly and judiciously for a number of years, and when he returned to England, he left the country in a better condition than it had ever been in before.

"His friends gave him a warm welcome, for he returned with wealth and honors, but he was called upon to answer very serious charges, and he was pursued to the last by jealous enemies. In spite of his brilliant life, Lord Clive's death was the

saddest that can be imagined—that of a suicide—and he whose ambition God used as an instrument for the spread of his blessed gospel died himself without a hope in Christ, impiously taking the life that God had given."

"Poor Lord Clive!" said Minnie, compassionately; "I am so sorry that he was not a good man!"

"I am sorry that he was not a good man as well as a great soldier," said Harry; "I'd like to go and fight, and win battles."

"And come back dead!" exclaimed Minnie, in a piteous tone.

"No, you dear little goosey! if I were dead, I wouldn't come back at all. How could I?"

"I hope that you will both be soldiers," said their grandmamma.

The children looked at her in surprise.

"And fight manfully under Christ's banner against all the sins that so often get the better of you. We must first let the light of the gospel shine in our own hearts, for then only shall we be fit to carry it to the dark places, east or west, north or south, where its lifegiving beams have not yet penetrated."